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THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS  
OF ENGLAND





# THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

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TO  
FRANCIS, CARDINAL BOURNE





## PREFACE

THIS is not a book of striking novelty of outlook nor one of deep research. Almost everything in it has been in print already, but scattered in various monographs dealing with individual schools or problems, in articles in school magazines, and so forth. The value of the book, if it has any, lies in the bringing together of a good deal of this scattered information and thus contributing to the possibility of a comprehensive survey of the whole chequered story of Catholic education in England.

The amount of space at my disposal has only allowed of the briefest possible sketch of the history and present condition of each of the schools included. Many as they read will feel that their own school has been treated far too slightly. If at the same time they feel that all the others have in comparison had too much space allotted them, it will mean that substantial justice has, in this respect, been done. I would gladly have given more space to each had it been possible. If the injustice they feel has been done to their own school fires any to write on the subject themselves, a good work will have been done. No one can write well at any length on any school except one who has been educated there. On the other hand, a sketch of many schools included in a single volume like the present one, is best entrusted to one who has no close connection with any.

It is a real grief to me that I have been able to include so few schools. I should like to have written

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the story of Mount St Mary's, and to have told the varied fortunes of Prior Park. Whole fields of Catholic education have perforce been left untouched. I have been able to say nothing of the great day-schools like St Francis Xavier at Liverpool, and the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School, or St Ignatius', Stamford Hill, in London. In the same way I have been able to say nothing of the provincial grammar schools, like St Bede's at Manchester, or St Cuthbert's, Newcastle.

Then, again, there is the admirable work of the teaching brotherhoods—the Christian Brothers, the Xaverian Brothers, the Josephite Fathers, and so forth, whose schools for the middle classes are so far in advance of anything of like character and cost to be found outside the Church. There is ample material for another volume to be issued at some future time, and dealing with the whole subject from a point of view that is less historical and deals more directly with educational problems.

For myself, my object has been to trace the thread of Catholic education, in its unbroken continuity in spite of all persecutions and other difficulties, from the very beginning to the present time, and to show from what small beginnings, veritable grains of mustard-seed, the great colleges of the present time have slowly grown. If persecution has been so unable to crush us, if growth in a single century has been so prodigious, what may we not hope the future may have in store for us under God's continued blessing.

One note, in conclusion, seems to be called for about the spelling of French names. These French towns were known to our ancestors by English names which had their own pronunciation and sometimes their own spelling, just as Paris, Lyons, Rheims, and Orleans have to-day. In penal days Douay, St Omers, Liege



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(rhyming with siege), and others were household words. The old names are wrapped up with the old history, and so I have thought it best to retain them. Why should they be modernised and frenchified? They have their place in English History, and the old spelling and pronunciation helps to keep their memory fresh. Douai is a modern French town of little interest. Douay is a name full of meaning to every English Catholic.

My sincere thanks are due to the authorities of each and every one of the schools of which I have treated for the way in which they have placed the necessary information at my disposal, and have done all in their power to help me in my work. I can only hope that the result will interest them and that they will add to their kindness by noting for me, in view of a possible future edition, any small mistakes into which I may have fallen.

ARTHUR S. BARNES.

OXFORD, *4th October* 1926.



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# THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

## CHAPTER I

### SCHOOLS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

THE whole subject of education in the Middle Ages is one which presents considerable difficulties. The history of the universities is itself obscure, so that it is almost impossible to say at what precise date they had their beginning, but to an even greater degree is the story of the schools of that period hard to unravel for lack of detailed material. It was nobody's business to chronicle the small matters and trifling events which make up school life. So, for lack of information, many have been inclined to believe that no schools existed, and to contrast the provision made for education in these later centuries with the supposed absence of anything of the kind in what they are pleased to call "the Dark Ages." It is only after such a prolonged and detailed study as that made by the late Mr A. E. Leach, in his *Schools of Medieval England*, that it is realised that the very opposite was the truth, and that the provision of schools in the period before the great pillage which we know as the Reformation was, in proportion to the population, about four times as great as it was in the middle of the last century, before the great increase of these recent years. To take a single example from Mr Leach's book: in Herefordshire in 1530 there were seventeen grammar schools for a

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population of 30,000, more than one for every 2000 of the population, while in 1864 the *Schools Inquiry Report* gives the number available at that time as only one to every 23,750. Certainly, as our author remarks, "the contrast is not to the disadvantage of our pre-Reformation ancestors."

### THE BISHOP'S SCHOOLS

In all countries, throughout the history of the Church, there was one force constantly operating to keep up the standard of education, and that was the necessity of providing a clergy sufficiently learned to carry on the duties of the ministry. The least-educated priest of the Middle Ages had not only to be able to read and write, but must possess a working knowledge of Latin to enable him to understand his Breviary and his Mass, and to study so much philosophy and theology as was absolutely necessary for his priestly duties. The ordinary chantry priest of the mediæval period was no doubt very far from being in any sense a learned man, but this amount of learning he must have possessed even in the difficult period that followed the Black Death and the Wars of the Roses.

It was in all ages the duty of the bishop to provide for his own diocese a sufficient supply of priests qualified at least to carry on the work of the diocese and to fill the various benefices which might fall vacant. It is therefore with the bishop's schools, and the provision for education made in connection with the cathedrals, that any inquiry into mediæval education must begin. These schools, in which the priest of the period got most, if not all, of his education, were not, indeed, the only schools in existence—that was very far from being the case,—but were the chief schools of the period, and



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the only ones so completely graduated as to allow of a boy receiving in them the whole of his education until he went forth at his ordination to take his place in the work of life. Because of this, and because in all Catholic countries education has invariably been held to belong to the domain of the Church, the bishop had always the right of supervision, and even of intimate control, over all the schools of any kind which might exist in his diocese.

### THE SONG SCHOOL

The education of a boy who aspired to the priesthood, or at least to that modicum of knowledge which admitted him to the "privilege of clergy," began at the song school. These schools were rendered necessary by the demand for boys who could take their part in the services of the Church, and who therefore must be able to read, though not always to understand, the Latin of the Breviary and Missal, and to have a sufficient acquaintance with the Plain Chant of the Church services. These schools were the elementary and preparatory schools of the time, and supplied the basis of the education which was carried further in some cases, but by no means in all, by the grammar schools. The cathedral choir schools are, in a way, their modern successors, even though it may not be possible in any case to establish an unbroken continuity.

The best picture that we have of a song school in mediæval England is perhaps that which is to be found in the Prioress's Tale in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* :

"A little school of Christian folk there stood  
Down at the further end, in which there were  
Children an heap, y-comen of Christian blood,  
That learned in that schoole, year by year,  
Such manner doctrine as men used there;

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That is to say, to singe and to read,  
As smalle children do in their childhood.  
Among these children was a widow's son,  
A little clergeon, that seven years was of age.

This little child, his little booke learning,  
As he sat in the school in his primer  
His *O Alma Redemptoris* hearde sing  
As children learned her antiphoner;  
And, as he durst, he drew him nigh and near,  
And hearkened to the wordes and the note,  
Till he the firste verse could say by rote.

Nought wist he what his Latin was to say,  
For he so young and tender was of age  
But on a day his fellow 'gan he pray  
To expound him the song in his language  
Or tell him what the song was in usage.

His fellow, which that elder was than he,  
Answered him thus. This song, I have heard say,  
Was makéd of our blissful Lady free  
Her to saluen, and eke her to pray  
To be our help and succour when we die.  
I can no more expound in this matter  
I learne song, I can no more grammar."

There we have the song school drawn to the life. The little 'clergeon' not yet seven years old, but already destined for the priesthood should he persevere to the end, is learning his primer by himself, and at the same time listening to the older children as they learn to sing our Lady's antiphone for Advent and Christmas, *Alma Redemptoris*. Drawn alike by the music and the words, though these latter as yet mean nothing to him, he leaves his place and creeps closer, so that he may hear better, and at last, through the constant repetitions, knows by heart the first line, music and words alike. He asks his friend, one older than himself, a boy perhaps of ten or so, what the

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meaning is ; but he, too, though he can tell him the general purport, cannot as yet construe the words. He is there to learn song, he explains, and knows as yet but little grammar. To teach grammar was not the function of the song school, that would come later at another school. At the song school they learnt to read and to write, and to sing in Latin, but no more, and there, no doubt, many of them stopped their education. Like our own choir-boys and choir-men who are not making a study of the classics, they learnt enough to enable them to sing the Latin required for the services of the Church, and to do this not unintelligently, but with a general understanding of the meaning of the words. At the cathedrals the song school came under the management and direction of the precentor, as belonging to his department; but there were many other song schools all over the country, in connection with the monasteries and collegiate churches, and with very many even of the larger parish churches.

### THE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

From the song school the boy who was desirous of being educated for the priesthood, or of obtaining further education for other purposes, went on to the grammar school, and especially to the grammar school connected with the cathedral of his native diocese. These were not, of course, the only grammar schools in the country. By the sixteenth century, at any rate, almost every small town or large village of two thousand souls or more had its arrangement for more advanced teaching than could be got in the song schools. But these other schools were, so to speak, adventitious. They grew up in response to demand, wherever they were needed or opportunity offered. In that they



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differed from the cathedral schools, which were a necessary part of every such foundation. These were the oldest schools in England, and since education has always been held among Catholics to be a function of the Church, and under the direction of the bishop, the norm to which all other schools necessarily more or less conformed. The bishop's minister of education, so to speak, was the chancellor, and he held sway directly over the theological school, which was sometimes known as the Chancellor's School, and indirectly over all the other schools of the diocese.

Several writers, among them Mr Leach, have supposed that, because the chancellor in early times bore the title of *scholasticus*, he was therefore himself the schoolmaster. But this can hardly have often been the case, even in the smallest dioceses. He had, of course, the general charge of all the scholastic work of the diocese. If he found time to teach at all in person, his work would probably have taken the form of lecturing in the school of theology. He would not have been likely to teach grammar to a number of half-grown boys from the city, only a few of whom had any intention of going on to learn theology and the other studies necessary for the priestly vocation.

Since a grammar school of some sort was thus a necessity to every bishop, and since, if any schools had survived in England after the overthrow of the Roman dominion they have left no trace by which they can be identified, we may reasonably assume that these were the first schools to be established. If so, 'the King's School' at Canterbury is entitled to be called the *doyen* of English schools. It is now called 'the King's School,' as having been founded by Edward VI; but that monarch's idea, or rather the Lord Protector's idea, of making a foundation was largely limited to the simple

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process of exempting an existing institution from the general wreckage and pillage that was being carried out. The school was originally the ancient Archbishop's School of Canterbury, and even though no document survives to prove the point, we can hardly be wrong if we assign its origin to the coming of St Augustine and date it somewhere about the year 600. The parallel school at York was flourishing long before the year 800, when it achieved immortality in connection with its great master, Alcuin, who went from there to found the Palace School at the court of Charlemagne. The school at Dunwich, the cathedral see of East Anglia, was founded, on the model of that of Canterbury, in the year 631.

It follows from this fundamental fact, that the existing school system of England derives ultimately from the schools founded by St Augustine and his companions, that we must look for our original models to Rome, and to the system of education followed there in the sixth century. For information on this head we must go to Quintilian, who wrote about the end of the first century. Changes in detail there no doubt were between that time and the time of St Gregory, but the general system remained the same, though the schools had gradually passed from pagan to Christian, and eventually ecclesiastical, control. The study of the classics in like manner came by degrees to take a secondary place in favour of later writers and of Holy Scripture, with Priscian and Donatus as the recognised authorities on grammar in place of Probus and the earlier writers.

The recognised province of the grammar school in Roman days was the *trivium*, or grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The *quadrivium* of later studies, divided into the four heads of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, was taken elsewhere. Arithmetic, before

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the introduction of Arabic numerals, must have been a formidable subject. But the course of the *trivium* has left its mark on some Catholic schools to the present day in the names given to the various classes, such as grammar, syntax, poetry, and rhetoric.

The grammar schools of the Middle Ages were, as a rule, judged by modern standards, very small. In most of them there was but a single teacher, and only in the larger schools was there any provision made for an assistant. They probably rarely reached a hundred pupils, and not infrequently had only ten or twenty.

### SCHOOL LIFE IN THE MEDIÆVAL PERIOD

A schoolboy's life in those days was no doubt a rough one. In all past ages our ancestors seem to have shared King Solomon's opinion that to spare the rod was to spoil the child, and to have held that only by blows and violence could boys be induced to proceed along the path of learning. The modern doctrine that a boy must always be allowed to do just as he pleases, and that no compulsion must ever be used for fear of inducing in him some undesirable 'complex,' was to our ancestors, perhaps not altogether unfortunately, wholly unknown.

The very earliest literary picture of a school which has come down to us, writes Mr Leach in the work we have already cited,<sup>1</sup> is to be found in a Greek mime of Herondas, *circa* 250 B.C., called *The Master*. A mother takes her boy to the grammar school and asks the master to give him a good flogging. He has stripped the very roof off her house by his losses, gambling at odd-and-even and knuckle-bones, while his writing-tablet lies neglected in a corner and he says his repetition at the

<sup>1</sup> Leach, *Schools of Medieval England*, p. 14.



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rate of a word a minute. The master, nothing loth, brings out his leather strap. The boy is hoisted on the back of another, with two others to hold his hands and legs, and the strap is applied till the boy is 'as mottled as a water-snake,' while the mother still cries, 'Give it him,' 'Give it him,' and threatens him with gag and fetters. The only actual picture that remains to us of an ancient Roman school, now to be seen at the museum of Naples, represents a similar scene. The same system went on in English schools, and is not altogether unknown even now.

The reply of Haddon to Sir William Cecil in the time of Queen Elizabeth is well known. Sir William had expressed himself as against corporal punishment in schools, but was opposed not only by Haddon but also by Ascham. Haddon said "that the best schoolmaster of our time was also the greatest beater." He was alluding to his own master, Cox, the headmaster of Eton, a worthy predecessor of the more famous Keate. Ascham agreed that Cox had, in Haddon, "sent from his school into the University one of the best scholars indeed of our time, yet wise men do think that that so came to pass rather by the great towardness of the scholar than by the great beating of the master." "Whether this be true or not," he added, "you yourself are best witness."

Another schoolmaster of the period who did not spare the rod was Udal, also headmaster of Eton and Cox's successor. The lines of Thomas Tusser (*Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*) are often quoted :

"From Paul's I went, to Eton sent,  
To learn straightways the Latin phrase;  
Where fifty-three stripes given to me at once I had;  
For fault but small, or none at all,  
It came to pass that beat I was;  
See Udal see, the mercy of thee,  
To me poor lad."

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Even Chaucer's 'little clergeon,' but seven years old and newly come to the song school, knew well that for leaving his primer and learning instead our Lady's antiphone, he would 'be beaten thrice in an hour.' The worst case of all, perhaps, was the master who was accustomed to beat his pupils on arriving at school every morning, "for to get himself an heate."

But the schoolboy's life even in those days was not altogether without its special enjoyments and alleviations. Christmas-time brought its rejoicings and the curious customs connected with the 'boy-bishop,' when for one day, generally the Feast of the Holy Innocents, all the functions usually performed by the bishop and priests of the church were, so far as that was possible, carried out by the boys in the church. The boys, dressed for the characters of those whom they represented, took their places in the upper stalls. In the procession all was reversed; the canons led the way and the boys, with the boy-bishop last of all, brought up the rear. But in the boys' eyes doubtless the most important event of the day was the supper with which it ended. At St Paul's the boy-bishop might choose which of the canons he would sup with, and might take with him a staff of not more than fifteen, namely, two chaplains, two taper-bearers, five clerks, two vergers, and four residentiary canons. The boy-dean might take three such attendants with him, and each 'canon residentiary' two. After the supper the boys were conducted back to their lodgings with dancing and singing and torches, and there spiced drink and wine were ready to finish the day.

As the regulations which governed education in the Middle Ages for the most part ensured a monopoly to the one grammar school in each town, the joys of fighting the boys of the rival school were seldom attain-

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able. But London was too large a city to be served by a single school, and Stow, in his *Survey of London*, gives us a lively picture of what sometimes happened in consequence. "The scholars of Paul's," he tells us, "meeting with those of St Anthony's would call them 'Anthony pigs,' and these again would call the others 'pigeons of Paul's,' because many pigeons were bred in Paul's church, and St Anthony was always figured with a pig following him." . . . "And so they usually fall from words to blows, with their satchels full of books, many times in great heaps that they troubled the streets and passengers; so that finally they were restrained with the decay of St Anthony's school."

Nor were games wholly absent. "Every year," says Fitzstephen, writing as early as 1175, "on Shrove Tuesday, all the boys in the school bring their cocks to their masters, and the holiday is given up to looking on at cock-fights in the morning." In the afternoon they all went out to Smithfield for a great game of football. Each school had its own ball, so the game must have been 'kickabout' rather than football; unless, indeed, the schools played separately.

### OTHER GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

The bishop's schools attached to the cathedrals, although the centre and mainspring of the whole educational system of the Middle Ages, were obviously quite insufficient to provide for the need of the whole country. A single school of perhaps a hundred boys, with little or no provision made for boarding boys whose homes were not in the city, could do but little, for instance, for the whole of the vast diocese of Lincoln. There sprang up, therefore, under various auspices and through many benefactors, a system of grammar schools



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spread all over the country and providing for the needs of even the smaller towns. The collegiate churches, of which there were many, nearly always supported such a school. No doubt something of the kind was a necessity to them for the due performance of divine service and the maintenance of the choir. There were schools of this sort, for instance, in connection with the church at Thetford; at Derby, through the benefaction of a gentleman bearing the delightful name of William of the April Beard; at Gloucester, at Waltham, and in many other places.

The monasteries have enjoyed a reputation which is not wholly deserved as supporters of the general education of the country. In no case, apparently, unless by some great exception, did a monk teach in a school outside the monastery, nor was there ever a school for externs carried on within the precincts of the monastery itself. Except for the boys of the almonry, of whom more anon, the monasteries as such took no direct part in general education, though no doubt they were most efficient in the education of their own subjects,—boys who came to them as postulants at a much younger age and in far larger numbers than is the custom nowadays. In many cases there were regular ‘alumniates,’ where boys were brought up and educated for the Order, wearing already the monastic habit and living to some extent the monastic life. But of a school kept by monks for the benefit of their fellow-countrymen and taught by monks there seems to be no trace, though where the abbot or prior was the feudal lord of the town he was in many cases the founder of an extern grammar school for the town. He usually kept the right of nominating the teacher, who was a secular priest or a layman. The grammar-school building itself, if within the monastery at all, was in



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the outer or kitchen court of the monastery, which would be 'out of bounds' for the choir monks.

In other places, where there was no cathedral or other large church which rendered a school necessary, it was generally left to a lay benefactor to found a school for the town. Where no benefactor was forthcoming the citizens undertook the matter for themselves, and a school was founded by them, in connection generally with some guild or company. The school at Stratford-on-Avon, at which William Shakspeare may perhaps have received his education, was founded by the Guild of St Mary. In London we have in like manner the great city companies of the Merchant Tailors and the Mercers as founders of schools, while often companies, such as the Goldsmiths, appear as trustees for schools which had been founded in various country towns.

In these various ways, before the end of the mediæval period, the whole country had been dotted with grammar schools, all more or less replicas of the cathedral school, all owing allegiance to the bishop and under the general control of the chancellor, and all alike available for the general education of the boys of the place, as well as frequently providing their quota of boys who were to go on to the higher education provided by the theological schools of the diocese, and by the universities which were by this time rising into importance.

### THE ALMONRY BOYS

In the Middle Ages there was very small provision made for orphanages as such. But every cathedral, and almost every large church and monastery, arranged for a certain number of boys who were taken in on the score of charity, and lodged and fed within the precincts. These boys, so far as their maintenance was

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concerned, came under the department of the almoner or bursar, but their education was generally provided for by their attendance at the extern grammar school. They were often employed also about the church, some who had good voices no doubt as choristers, others as servers for the many masses, and as candle-bearers and thurifers at the High Mass. In some cases, as at Salisbury after 1314, and at Westminster, they had a master of their own, and grew afterwards into a practically separate foundation.

As these boys were only 'charity boys,' their standard of living was not high. They were fed on 'the broken meats' of the canons or of the monks, as the case might be, which means that the food served to their betters came down to them afterwards, just as nowadays the joint served for lunch in the dining-room makes a second appearance later at the kitchen dinner. They were often clerics, and had received the tonsure. At St Albans it was specially laid down that they were to shave 'an ample crown.'

At Westminster the boys of the almonry were more than usually numerous. Towards the end of the fourteenth century we gather from the almoner's account rolls that they were twenty-eight in number. A sum of 48s. 8d. is charged for cloth for the boys' clothes. They had a master of their own who was paid £1, 6s. 8d., besides board and lodging. They lived with him in a separate house, which had four chambers and four chimneys. Later on a 'grammar master' appears, and it grows into a regular grammar school.

## THE CHANTRY SCHOOLS

Lastly, and to complete the subject, a few words must be said about the chantry schools. These were to be

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found all over the country, in quite small villages sometimes, as well as in the larger towns. Money was left by pious benefactors to endow a 'chantry' in connection with their parish church, where a priest should say Mass daily for ever for their souls and for the souls of their relatives. Very often there was added the further injunction that the priest who held this appointment should occupy his day by teaching the children of the parish. Sometimes these bequests grew into greater foundations, and more than one of our existing schools has its origin in the bequest of some testator who only had it in mind to found a chantry school.

It is impossible to say what the value of the education given in this way really was. It obviously varied not only with the terms of the bequest, but also with the capabilities of the priest immediately concerned. Here one might find one who was genuinely interested in teaching, and who carried the education of a promising pupil at least as far as he could have been taken in any neighbouring grammar school. In the next parish, perhaps, there might be another priest, disinclined to teach at all, neglecting his duties, and hardly teaching the children anything beyond their alphabet. There were no school inspectors to report to us, and no standard to which such schools were expected to conform. But the point to be remembered is, that throughout the Middle Ages education was not only for the wealthy, or only to be obtained in the more populous places, but by means of these chantry schools was brought into every parish and placed, generally entirely gratis, within the reach of every labourer's son.

That was the Catholic ideal, but almost the first act of the Protestant Reformation was to destroy it. The Chantry Acts of 1545 and 1548 were the principal instruments by which this was done. Not that there



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was any intention to destroy education as such. It was the unfortunate accident that the Church alone had been the originator and maintainer of education in England which led to the disastrous effects which followed when all ecclesiastical foundations, except only parish churches, were being swept away. "Three hundred grammar schools," says Mr Leach in his *English Schools at the Reformation*, "is a moderate estimate of the number in the year 1535 when the floods of the great revolution which is called the Reformation were let loose. Most of them were swept away under Henry VIII or his son; or, if not swept away, plundered or damaged." The results were felt everywhere, and especially at the universities. "In the reign of Edward," says Mr G. R. Green in his *Short History of the English People*, "all teaching ceased at the Universities; the students, indeed, had fallen off in number, the libraries were in part scattered or burned, the intellectual impulse of the New Learning had died away." The whole of the great Protestant myth which regards the Reformation as a period of enlightenment rests, by the way, upon this misapplication of the phrase, 'the New Learning.' In the sense of increased knowledge and education there was no new learning. The Reformation did nothing whatever for learning in that sense. The phrase, which one writer after another has thus misused, had in its origin nothing to do with knowledge. It was simply 'the novel teaching,' 'the new heresy,' that was so designated. For 'learning,' in the modern sense, the Reformation was nothing but an unmixed disaster, and the true title which Edward VI deserves is that which Mr Leach has given him, "Edward VI: Spoiler of Schools."



## CHAPTER II

### WINCHESTER AND WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM

IN many ways the name of Walter de Merton stands out as the one to whom the credit of making the greatest individual advance in English education ought to be given. He was the first to found a college at the university for the education of the secular clergy, so that all the learning might not be monopolised by the friars and the members of the various religious orders. He was also the first to see that such a college at Oxford needed to have in connection with it, though by no means necessarily at Oxford, a school for the education of boys in grammar, who could then go on with profit to higher studies in the university. In those days English was not yet sufficiently formed as a language to be used for teaching, and the language used in the schools in Merton's time was French. It was, however, in the Merton Grammar School at Oxford, that, if we may trust Trevisa, the translator of Higdens's *Polychronicon* in 1385, the change was made a century later; "For John Cornwall" of this school, he tells us, "changed the lore in grammar schools and the construction of French into English. For, since his time, in all the grammar schools of England children leave French and construe and learn in English, and have thereby advantage on one side and disadvantage in another. The advantage is that they learn their grammar in less time than children were wont to do;

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disadvantage is that now the children of the grammar schools know no more French; and that is harm to them if they pass the sea and travel in strange lands." But, although Merton was to a great extent a pioneer, and although he is nowadays given the credit, which really belongs more justly to the Black Friars or Dominicans, of being the founder of the modern college system at Oxford and Cambridge, it is not to him but to another that we must assign the really epoch-making advance in the school system of England. Winchester College, the great foundation of William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester in 1369, is by common consent the pioneer of the new school system and the mother of the existing Public Schools of England.

The idea of William of Wykeham in making this new foundation was still, primarily, the building up of a learned clergy for his diocese. The great disaster of the Black Death had wrought havoc in the ranks of the clergy. It was, therefore, as a work of restoration that the twin foundations were planned; the one a grammar school at Winchester on a scale hitherto unthought of, fit to be, as Henry VI in later years described Eton, "the lady, mother and mistress of all other grammar schools," and the other a college at Oxford which should similarly eclipse in magnificence those that had been already founded in that place of learning. By these means he tells us that he hoped to effect "the cure of the common disease of the clerical army, which we have seen grievously wounded by lack of clerks, due to plagues, wars, and other miseries."

The upheaval of the Reformation, and other changes inevitable through the lapse of years, have had their effect on the great school then founded in 1382, but for more than four hundred and fifty years, from 1393 to 1857, the original statutes of William of Wykeham re-

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mained in force, and were the actual authority according to which the school was carried on. The account of its customs written in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century remained, as Bishop Moberly used to testify, true in its minutest details of the early part of the nineteenth, and would probably have been equally true of the fourteenth and fifteenth. No place is so conservative or so retentive of past customs as is a great school of boys, and so in every essential point, save only in religion—the most essential of all—Winchester has continued the same throughout her long history, and still remains the triumphant monument of the practical wisdom of our Catholic ancestors and of their idea of what a Catholic school should be for English boys.

William of Wykeham is generally credited, and undoubtedly justly so, with having made, in his foundation of Winchester, so important a step forward in educational matters that he has come to be given the title of the Founder of the Public School System. When, however, we examine closely into the matter, it is a little difficult to say exactly in what points the new departure consisted. There had been schools in England, and boarding-schools too, as we have already pointed out, in connection with almost every cathedral and collegiate church, so that the provision of such a school had come, by the end of the fourteenth century, to be almost an indispensable adjunct of any such foundation. There was nothing new, therefore, when William of Wykeham built the collegiate church of St Mary of Winton, in his attaching to it a school for boys.

Nor, again, was there any fresh departure in the connection of the school with a college at the university. Walter de Merton had been the first to do



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this, and Wykeham was only following an example already set, and one which had before him been followed by Robert of Eglesfield at Queen's College at Oxford, and by Bishop Stapleton at Exeter College, for, as the latter remarks, those "who have not drunk a foundation of grammar are rendered useless or at least less useful for higher learning."

Least of all was there any innovation in the restriction of the benefits of the actual foundation (that is to say, of the scholarships which gave the right to free education within the actual walls of the college) to those who were intending to devote their lives to the work of the priesthood. For this was, as we have already pointed out, the one great object which inspired every one of the great founders of the time. Not all who entered the school would go through to the priesthood, there would be many who would fall out by the way and betake themselves to various secular careers, but the priesthood was the goal at which all were aiming. The scholars, even the youngest, had all received the tonsure, and were technically 'clerks.' The gowns, too, which they still wear at Winchester, at Eton, and at Westminster, among other schools, are the old dress of the clergy, by which they are distinguished from the other boys of the laity.

In no one of these points, therefore, can we say that Wykeham made any innovation or practice that was already established. With regard to each of them he could point to existing instances already in actual and successful work. Yet there can be no sort of doubt that the foundation of Winchester does mark an epoch in the history of English schools. All these things had been done before, but separately and on a scale comparatively small; Wykeham combined them all at once, and did it on a scale of magnificence that till then had



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never been imagined. Cathedral and collegiate churches had had their schools from time immemorial, but as a mere appendage, even though an essential part of the foundation; Wykeham raised the school at Winchester to be the equal of the church to which it was attached; nay, more, he built and endowed the church for the sake of the school, the latter rather than the former being the principal part of the foundation. For the first time boys had a great institution founded for themselves, and not as a mere department of a foundation with other objects.

It shows the strength which the custom of attaching schools to churches had obtained, that it does not seem to have occurred to Wykeham, or to Henry VI in later days, that a school was quite able to exist without being connected with any ecclesiastical foundation at all. After long centuries, both at Winchester and Eton, the collegiate church has at length passed away and has practically become a mere school chapel, while the schools themselves in both instances have grown to dimensions which their founders can hardly have contemplated.

The original scheme for the college does not seem to have included any provision of fellows. It was to consist of a warden and seventy scholars, and the formal designation of the college for legal purposes still runs in that form : 'The warden and scholars, clerks.' Fellows were added, however, almost immediately, to the number of ten, all appointed for life and only removable for misconduct. They had nothing whatever to do with the boys, their duty being wholly confined to the proper carrying out of the services in the church; which included a daily High Mass, as well as the recitation of the whole of the Divine Office. With them, since our present interest is with the school and

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not the church, we need not further concern ourselves. The warden had the general supervision of the whole foundation, and to him the master was to appeal in case his authority was set at naught. But under ordinary circumstances he does not seem to have had much to do with the school or with its discipline. The two departments of the foundation, the church and the school, were organised separately, the warden alone, or the sub-warden in his absence, having a general control over the whole. For the church there were provided the warden, ten fellows, three chaplains, and three lay clerks; besides sixteen choristers, who were to be less than twelve years of age on appointment. The seventy scholars, and such other boys as were allowed to join the school, were under the jurisdiction of a master, and of an usher or second master, neither of whom had any duties to perform in the church except on Sundays and holidays.

It is interesting to note, in view of recent discussions in connection with various headmasterships, that no stipulation is made in the statutes that either of these masters should be a priest. Wykeham appears to have held that the ecclesiastical side of education was sufficiently secured by the connection of the school with the college of priests, and saw no reason why the teachers should not be laymen. As a matter of fact, although it is difficult to trace how the matter stood, it is yet quite clear that several headmasters in early times were not in orders. Christopher Tomson, for instance, who was headmaster from 1560 to 1571, was certainly a layman, and practised after leaving Winchester as a physician in London.

The seventy scholars were not, as a rule, to be more than twelve years of age on admission, and were to stay on until the completion of their eighteenth year, with

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an extra year thrown in in case they were on the roll for New College. The stipulation is made that they must be *pauperes et indigentes*, but this needs a word of explanation. There can be no doubt of the general intention of the founder that they should be sons of parents who could not comfortably afford to educate them otherwise, but they were not by any means to be regarded as mere charity boys. The choristers, on the other hand, were such; they were to be appointed *intuitu charitatis*, and to be fed on the broken victuals of the priests and scholars, and all the conditions of their life point to extraction from a lower class. But the scholars might have an income of their own of five marks a year when they were elected, a sum which was the equivalent of the second master's salary, and therefore a large amount for a child under twelve to possess. It has been suggested, and probably with justice, that the insertion of this phrase, *pauperes et indigentes*, which occurs regularly in the statutes of almost every similar foundation at that period—as, for instance, at Eton and at All Souls', Oxford,—was a mere device of the lawyers to prevent appeal being made to the provision of the canon law against the appropriations of churches, since the poverty of the inmates of houses receiving such appropriations was the only justification legally allowed. In practice, probably, the scholars were drawn from the smaller gentry and more substantial burghers; very much the class, indeed, from which such scholarships, both at public schools and at the universities, are generally filled up at the present time. That they were not 'poor' in any other sense is clear enough alike from the names borne by those who were earliest admitted and from the fact that the statutes contemplate, both at Winchester and Eton, that sons of the noble classes would come to live with them and share their education



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as commensals or commoners, an institution of which we will have more to say presently. Royalty itself, in the person of Henry VII, is said, though perhaps on doubtful authority, to have shared the lot, as a 'commensal,' of the 'poor and indigent' scholars of Eton, and among the similar scholars of Winchester we find such names as that of Henry Chicheley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, whose father, Sir Robert Chicheley, was twice Lord Mayor of London.

It is not very easy, from lack of information, to draw a detailed picture of school life at Winchester in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The statutes do not give us very much help. A lively Latin poem, which for a long time was looked upon as the work of Jonson, the headmaster in the middle of the sixteenth century, is now thought to be a hundred years later ; but, thanks to the unchanging conservatism so characteristic of schools, the actual date of the document is of comparatively little consequence. Gaps, too, in our information about Winchester can often be filled up from Eton, since the two foundations at that date so closely resembled each other, even in the small details of their managements.

The buildings at Winchester have altered so little in the five hundred years which have elapsed since their original foundation that we can without much difficulty recognise each portion of the structure referred to in the statutes, and this is a great help in reconstructing the system. The outer quadrangle was entirely given up to the external works connected in those times with a foundation of this kind, which would have to be self-supporting in many ways which would not now be thought of. This outer quadrangle, therefore, contained the slaughter-house, the wood-house, and the brewery, together with granaries and storehouses of



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various kinds. Through these all had to pass before reaching the actual school buildings in the inner quadrangle. This seems to us to be an odd arrangement. We should have expected these buildings to be at the back and approached by another entrance. It is, however, an arrangement which can be paralleled in other similar buildings of the same date, and was probably designed for the sake of greater security in an age when town and gown rows were not infrequent, and were of a very much more serious character than the modern 'rag,' which has, to some extent, taken their place.

The real life of the place passed entirely in the inner quadrangle or 'Chamber Court.' Access to it is gained by an archway under a gate tower, and here on each side may still be seen the statues of our Blessed Lady, crowned and bearing the Holy Child, which were placed there in the founder's time and must be among the very few pre-Reformation statues left standing in England. The south side of the court was wholly taken up by the chapel and the hall, built end to end after the plan so often followed in later times at Oxford, and the remaining three sides were given up to residential purposes, the warden occupying the chamber over the central tower and the remaining members of the foundation being grouped around him. The buildings were of two stories only, and were divided up into six large chambers on each floor, the lower ones being the quarters assigned to the boys and occupied by them, eleven or twelve in each chamber. The floor of the lower chambers was originally of chalk "rammed hard on a bottom of flints, like the floors of any old Hampshire barn," and it was not till 1540, after the school had been in existence for one hundred and fifty years, that this was replaced by a flooring of oak. The only

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furniture provided by the college consisted of about ten beds, the smallest boys, under fourteen, having to share one bed between two. Any other furniture, if there was any, had to be provided by the boys themselves, and consequently, since no mention of it is made in the inventories, we have no information about it. It is not likely that there was much. Boys, in those days, were made to live the simple life.

The upstairs chambers were rather sets of rooms than single chambers, and were assigned to the senior members of the foundation, three to each. There was a gallery running along the whole floor, so that the occupants of each chamber could visit others without descending into the court. Otherwise the 'chamber' was cut up into one large sleeping-room which all had in common, and three little private studies which were assigned to each separately as his private study. First, second, and third chambers were occupied in this way by nine of the fellows. The tenth fellow, the head-master, and the second master or usher occupied 'sixth.' 'Fourth' was assigned to the warden as a reception-room for guests and so forth, and 'fifth' remained unoccupied and unassigned, a fact which was destined to lead to most momentous consequences in the early future. The sixteen choristers had a special 'chamber' assigned to them on the ground-floor, and known as 'seventh.' They had also a special school-room of their own, and the room over this was occupied by the three chaplains.

Washing in chambers was strictly prohibited. If the fellows spilt water in the first-floor rooms, it ran through and wetted the beds of the boys below, and, in like manner, we can understand that spilt water would not add to the comfort of a floor composed of chalk and mud. A penthouse was provided outside the kitchen

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and near the hall, with a stone trough and basins, and this was used by the boys, while a similar conduit in the cloisters behind the chapel provided all that was required for their seniors.

School was carried on in one large room, under hall, in what is now called 'seventh chamber.' It is the only school building of the fourteenth century in England which still survives, and is, therefore, of exceptional interest. Its measurements, which have since been curtailed, were about 45 feet by 29 feet, with a height of 15 or 16 feet. There were four wooden columns which held up the ceiling (which was also the floor of hall), and it was lighted by three windows in the southern wall. Opposite, on the north wall, hung a great map of the world, while on the west wall was the famous device of the mitre, the crozier, and the rod, with the well-known motto, *Aut disce, aut discede, manet sors tertia, cædi*. "Either learn, or else go. There remains a third choice, to be whipped."

There was a *rostrum* for declamation under this device. At each end of the room were the thrones or 'desks' of the headmaster and the usher. In the windows were raised seats, occupied by some of the elder boys, known as prefects, whose duty it was to overlook the others and keep them in order. These 'prefects' form an integral part of Wykeham's plan and are provided for in the statutes. They were to be eighteen in number, as they still are, and were to be assigned three to each chamber, being chosen from among their school-fellows on account of their age, knowledge, and general worthiness, in order that they might exercise a general office of supervision, look after the behaviour of the juniors, and report anything that might go wrong to the master. It is the earliest mention known of a very characteristic feature in



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English schools, and it may be that Wykeham originated it. It seems more likely, however, that in this he was merely carrying out an existing and well-established custom which had grown up in similar schools. In any case, this plan of carrying on the government of a school largely through the instrumentality of the bigger boys has become almost universal in English schools, and perhaps constitutes the most marked difference between them and the schools of the Continent. No doubt evils may result in some cases, where the wrong boys are put into power and there is not sufficient supervision exercised by the masters, but in the main the system has proved its value by the great increase it brings about in the initiative and self-reliance of the boys. If English Public School men have been able, in spite of the undoubted deficiencies of their schools in matters of teaching and bookwork, to build up and maintain such a world-wide Empire as has never before been known, it is largely due to the prefect system which first taught those men how to rule, and which was ultimately derived from the wise provisions made by William of Wykeham and by other Catholic founders in the ages of faith.

The boys who were not prefects sat, apparently, each in his own fixed place near the master to whose 'book' he belonged. No record of the exact arrangement has been handed down, but the traditional 'scobs,' or wooden desks with arrangements for holding books, etc., seem to have come down from very early times.

In summer the school was held in the cloisters instead of the schoolroom, and the stone seats beneath the windows on which the boys sat are still to be seen. The practice of doing lessons in the cloisters was given up perhaps two hundred years ago, but the summer term still goes by the name of cloister-time.



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## LIFE AT WINCHESTER

Such, then, were the principal buildings and chambers in which the boys' lives were passed. The course of the daily routine can also be reconstructed with a certain degree of accuracy.

The day began at five o'clock with 'first peal,' and the prefect in each chamber called the sleepers. In later times this, with other unpleasant tasks, fell rather to the junior. They hurried into their clothes, for as soon as the bell stopped a Latin psalm had to be recited. At Eton they said matins of our Lady while they dressed, and this may be the meaning of the phrase used at Winchester. After the prayer was finished there was no time to be lost, for beds had to be made, hair brushed, and face and hands washed at the conduit outside, and all had to be completed before half-past five, when 'second peal' went for chapel. There is no stipulation in the statutes of either Winchester or Eton that the boys should go to daily Mass, but the fact that in later and Protestant times they did go each day to chapel at five-thirty, and stayed there for half an hour, seems clearly to show that in Catholic times they heard Mass always at this time, and probably it was the *Salve* or 'morrow Mass,' the votive Mass of our Lady ordered in the statutes, which they attended.

At six o'clock school began, and went on apparently for three hours. Breakfast was at nine, an informal meal consisting no doubt of bread and beer, and was allowed only to those under sixteen. The bell which summoned the boys to hall for this purpose served also to announce the High Mass which at the same time began in the chapel. Judging from the analogy of Eton, though we have no record of the practice at Winchester, on their way down from hall they went into the chapel

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for a few minutes, and remained there in order to adore at the Elevation of the High Mass. After school there was probably a break for play and perhaps for 'preparation,' done privately in chambers, for there was no more formal school until eleven, when the bell rang again and they went in for an hour.

Dinner was at midday, and they went in straight from school. At this meal all the community met together. The warden, the vice-warden, and the headmaster sat at the high table with three of the senior fellows. The other fellows, the usher, and the chaplains dined at 'senior end' of the side-tables, just as bachelors do in most college halls to-day, and the other side-tables were occupied by the boys, in no particular order. The lay clerks and the choristers waited at table, and had their dinner afterwards. One of the scholars read aloud from the Bible, the lives of the saints, or some theological work, and silence was kept all through both dinner and supper. There was a fire in the hall, on an open hearth in the middle, and it was apparently the only fire provided—except, of course, in the kitchen. On feast-days in winter after supper, but at no other times, all might stay in hall and gather round the fire, and spend a certain time in singing or talking or other amusements.

After dinner work began again, and lasted apparently till five o'clock. At five prayers were said as a close to the day's work, consisting of our Lady's antiphon, according to the season, and some collects. After that all were free till six, when supper was served in hall. After supper all went to chambers, and preparation went on till eight, when there was evening chapel. This at least was the custom in later years, but in Catholic times it seems more likely that chapel was earlier, as it certainly was at Eton, where vespers of our

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Lady were said just before supper. If chapel was as late as eight o'clock at Winchester, it will have been for night prayers said in common, but these at Eton were said not in chapel but in Long Chamber. After prayers immediately came bed, so that nearly nine hours were allowed for sleep.

Such was the routine on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, but Tuesday and Thursday were half holidays, and on those days, after dinner, names were called at Middle Gate, and forthwith, if weather permitted, all went off to 'Hills.' They walked two and two until Hills were reached, but once there they broke up and amused themselves as they pleased with games, till the time came for return, when they marched back, as they went, two and two. What games they played in Catholic days there is, alas! no means of knowing.

On Sundays and feast-days no work was done, but all the services of the Church were attended in chapel. That involved getting up an hour earlier than usual, in order to attend matins at half-past four, so that holidays cannot have been an unmixed joy.

There were no regular holidays in the sense of our vacations. Boys came to school to stay there, and did not, as a rule, go home during the whole course of their school life. The distance from their homes in most cases rendered this inevitable, and the position resembled that of those boys who at the present time are sent to the English colleges at Valladolid or at Lisbon, or who come home to school in England, while their parents are detained for some reason abroad. But there were holidays at school, at Christmas, at Easter, and in the summer, and at those times some at least of the boys went to friends in the neighbourhood, for the number of scholars 'drawing commons' can be traced from day



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to day in the old account-books, and often falls at such times to forty-five or fifty. Recognised vacations did not begin until 1518.

All the seventy scholars, of course, were clerks; definitely preparing for the priesthood; bound to receive the tonsure within their first year, and dressed suitably to their condition in a gown of dark colour, with a special prohibition of shoes that were red or green, the wearing of a sword or dagger, or a gown that was striped or parti-coloured. The general appearance must have been not unlike the Blue-Coat boys of modern days, especially as no covering was allowed for the head, but it lacked the yellow stockings which form so marked a feature of the modern dress.

### THE INSTITUTION OF COMMONERS

Wykeham's first object, the training up of a learned clergy, was thus carried out in the seventy scholars, but there were other boys for whom a liberal education was equally needed, but whose position or tastes kept them from turning towards the priesthood as a career in life. Apparently these were not thought of in his original plan, but pressure, we may suppose, was almost immediately brought to bear upon him, and, by what appears to be an insertion into the statutes, he made provision for them. Fifth Chamber, on the upper floor, remained untenanted and gave the opportunity. Ten boys, sons of nobles and special friends of the college, might be admitted to live there and share the education of the scholars. A similar provision was made at Eton, but for twenty such boys, who at each school bore the name of commensals or commoners, from the fact that they lived at a common table with the scholars. At Eton, too, from the first, there was a



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provision made that boys living in the town, either with their parents or under due supervision, might come in to be taught in the school. At Winchester this was not possible, because there was already a grammar school in connection with the cathedral, which had existed from very ancient days and had the monopoly for such boys. Hence the two schools developed somewhat differently. At Eton the Oppidans, or town boys, soon became the largest portion of the school, and the Commensals, properly so called as living in college and sharing the life of the scholars, seem very soon to have died out altogether. At Winchester the history is very obscure, but a system of the same sort seems to have grown up very quickly, and to have led in 1412 to an appeal from the master of the other school to the bishop, who at the time was Cardinal Beaufort. In consequence of this, perhaps, it was that at Winchester outsiders seem always to have lived after this date in premises belonging to the school and under its control, and not to have lodged, as at Eton, with people in the town.

In more recent times changes have been made in both schools, and in the same direction. The last of the dames passed away at Eton with Miss Jane Evans, and the title of dame is now given to mathematical and other non-classical masters who have houses for boys to board at. Commoners at Winchester no longer live in a special building, but in like manner have been distributed among the masters in houses in the city. Other schools have followed suit, and it is now the recognised system in almost every one of the larger schools of England. It is no doubt a great improvement, and by far the best method of obtaining the advantages which are natural to a big school without sacrificing the personal influence which is so

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necessary and yet so difficult to obtain when the numbers are at all large. It is strange to think that the whole system has grown almost accidentally out of the arrangement made by William of Wykeham for receiving 'commoners' into the vacant Fifth Chamber on the upper floor.

### THE END OF CATHOLIC WINCHESTER

Winchester at the Reformation was a stronghold of the ancient faith. Eton and King's favoured the novel teachings, but Winchester and New College were faithful beyond all others to the past. The headmaster at that time was John White, who afterwards, under Queen Mary, became Bishop of Winchester, and gave great offence to Queen Elizabeth by preaching the funeral sermon on her sister from the text, *Laudavi mortuos magis quam viventes*. "She has left," he said, "a sister to succeed her, a lady of great worth also, whom we are now bound to obey, for *melior est canis vivens leone mortuo*, 'Better is a living dog than a dead lion.'" The *ostiarius* or usher, the second in command, was of very different views. His name was William Ford, and he was an ardent Puritan and "a great enemy of Papism." It was in 1536, and the hopes of his party were running high, after the execution of Fisher and More, as to what the King might do. "There were many golden images then in the church of Wickham College, the door whereof was directly over against the Usher's chamber. One day Mr Ford tied a long cord to the images, linking them all in one cord; and being in his chamber after midnight, he plucked the cord's end and at one pull all the golden gods came down. It wakened all men with the rush, they were amazed at the terrible noise, and also dismayed at the grievous

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sight. The cord, being plucked hard and cut with a twitch, lay at the church door. At last they fell to searching, but Mr Ford, whom they most suspected, was found in his bed. Mr Ford afterwards led a dog's life among them. Mr White, the schoolmaster, the fellows of the house and the scholars crying out and railing at him by supportation of their master. Lewd men lay in wait for him many times; and one night, going into the town, he must needs come home to the College by the town walls, the gate of Trinity College being shut. This was espied, he was watched, and when he came to a blind dark corner, by King's Gate, there they laid on him with staves. He clapped his gown-collar, furred with fox-fur, round about his head and neck. They laid on him some strokes, but, by God's providence, the most part, in that great darkness, did light upon the ground. So they ran away and left Mr Ford for dead. But he tumbled and rolled himself to the gates (for they made him quite past going), and then cried for help, and people came in who took him up and bore him to his lodging."<sup>1</sup>

Mr Ford stood alone in his Puritanism. All the others were firm for the old faith. After the succession of Elizabeth almost all were ejected both from Winchester and from New College, and found their way to the Continent and to Allen's new foundation at Douay. If our present Catholic schools can claim any real line of actual descent from the older schools founded in England by our Catholic forefathers, it is to these scholars and fellows of Winchester and of New College, as we shall see in a later chapter, that the credit of preserving the continuity is certainly due.

<sup>1</sup> Strype, *Eccl. Memorials*, vol. iii., pt. i., p. 276.



## CHAPTER III

### ETON IN CATHOLIC DAYS

THE two foundations of Eton and Winchester had much in common. Eton was professedly an imitation, one might say a reproduction on a more magnificent scale, of the earlier college at Winchester. Whole pages of the statutes drawn up by William of Wykeham for his college are to be found almost verbatim in the statutes adopted for Eton by Henry VI. Each alike was preparatory to, and in closest connection with, a second college of the same founder at one of the universities. Just as Winchester was the natural approach to New College at Oxford, so Eton led on to King's College at Cambridge. And further, in order that the likeness might not only be on paper, but that the very spirit of the older foundation at Winchester might be reproduced at Eton, Waynflete, the future Lord Chancellor and founder of Magdalen College at Oxford, who was at the time master of Winchester, was induced to migrate to Eton, taking with him five fellows and thirty-five scholars, and to become the first provost of the new foundation.

The idea of Henry VI was not merely for a school. It was a much larger idea than that. He determined to convert the already existing parish church of Eton into a collegiate church, rebuilding it and making it one of the largest and noblest churches in the kingdom; and then, under the shadow of this glorious church,



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with its perpetual worship of Almighty God and intercession for the soul of the founder, to place a school which should educate freely seventy scholars for the priesthood. He hoped that it would also attract many of the sons of the great families and smaller gentry to share in the education which was thus provided.

The original foundation provided for the maintenance of a provost, ten fellows, and ten chaplains, all of whom were to be secular priests; ten clerks skilled in plain chant, of whom one was to be an organist and might be married; and sixteen choristers, under twelve years of age on appointment, to sing and to serve the daily masses. All these were for the service of the church, and had nothing to do, directly, with the conduct of the school. There were also to be thirteen bedesmen in an almshouse and thirteen poor lads as servitors.

The church, as it was planned by Henry VI, was to have been by far the largest building in pure Perpendicular style in England, and would have altogether exceeded both in size and grandeur the chapel at King's College, Cambridge. The measurements were decided upon, and the church was to consist of a choir of eight bays. This choir forms the present chapel. The nave was to be of eight bays also, but only one of these was ever carried out, owing to the troubles which followed in the Wars of the Roses, and the want of interest, which was not unnatural, on the part of the Yorkist princes towards the foundation of their predecessor. Had the design been carried out in its entirety, we should have had a building not unlike King's College Chapel, but exceeding it by at least thirty feet in length. A finer and much nobler appearance would have been imparted to it by the broad aisles separated from the nave by lofty arches, which would have taken the place of the low chapels between the buttresses

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which are all that were ever contemplated at King's. The whole width of the nave and aisles at Eton would have been greater than that of any cathedral, except only that of York.

As to the interior decoration, we have indeed the fullest details of what was intended by Henry VI, but it is not always easy to say exactly how much was carried out.

The High Altar was to stand twelve feet from the eastern wall and to have a reredos with figures in full relief of our Lord and His Apostles. Behind this altar, small as the space was, stood the altar of our Lady, and there were to be at least four other altars in the church, one on each side at the ends of the two aisles, and two more under the roof-loft on each side of the entrance to the choir. There was a large image of the Assumption, specially known as 'our Lady of Eton,' in the choir, which was an object of great veneration and the recipient of many legacies. Pilgrimages took place every year on 15th August in honour of 'our Lady of Eton.'

All the canonical hours were, of course, said daily in the church by those attached to the foundation for this purpose, and the 'use' followed was that of Sarum, with a few distinctive peculiarities. There were seven masses said daily with special solemnity, the first being of our Lady, with certain special prayers for the founder and for the church; the second for benefactors; and the third, the High Mass of the day. These three masses were all sung, and were at the High Altar. The fourth special mass was at a side altar, and was a votive mass, varying for each day in the week; the fifth was the Chapter Mass whenever that was appointed, the sixth was of the Annunciation, and the seventh was '*pro arbitrio dicentis*.'

To this great collegiate church, erected for the

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honour of our Lady and for the perpetual provision of prayer for himself and for his family, Henry VI added a school. His foundation, besides providing for the services of the church, provided also for the maintenance and education of seventy scholars. As time has gone on, the position of affairs has been reversed. The school is no longer only an annex to the great collegiate church. The college of priests, after lasting for more than four centuries, has been swept away. The school now remains alone the possessor of the buildings and the revenues, and even of the very name of the Eton College of priests. That is now, since 1870, a thing wholly of the past, except so far as it survives in a lay provost and vice-provost and in the seventy scholars of the foundation. To us, therefore, of to-day the school is of more interest than the college, and instead of spending more time on the church, and on the fellows and chaplains who served it, we will pass on at once to consider the life of the boys who made up the famous school in its earliest days.

### LIFE AT CATHOLIC ETON

From the first Henry had made up his mind that there should be two classes of boys at Eton. The idea of the 'commoners' of Winchester was to be transferred to the new school. There should be the seventy scholars who formed part of the actual foundation, and there should also be other boys, 'commensals' as he called them, who should share the education of the scholars, but should themselves defray the cost of their board and education. These 'commensals' were at first accommodated in college, but this plan did not last long, and afterwards for the most part they lived in the town with persons authorised to receive them, and so got the name



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of 'oppidans,' which they still bear. Of their manner of life, however, we know comparatively little, for most of our information applies directly only to the seventy scholars properly so called, who lived and boarded in the buildings of the college itself. For information about these we can go to the statutes of the college, and to a curious *Consuetudinarium* drawn up by William Malim, who was headmaster in 1560, for presentation to the Royal Commission which visited Eton in that year.

The school was divided up into 'forms,' of which originally there were seven, the first three being the Lower School and under the special jurisdiction of the usher, or lower master as he is now called, while the other four made up the Upper School under the headmaster. The Fourth Form, however, like the Remove of later date, occupied an intermediate position, and, although technically of the Upper School, was under the usher for the first and last hours of the day's work. No other master beyond these two seems to have been provided, and the whole of the work was shared between them.

Eighteen of the upper boys, who had special duties assigned to them, were known as 'prepostors,' a title which has come down to the present day, though with changed functions and lessened dignity. Of these, four were 'prepostors of school,' one had charge in hall, two in church, four in the playing-fields, four in the dormitory, while two had special charge of the commonsals or oppidans. Lastly, there was one whose business it was to look after "those who do not wash their face and hands and who are otherwise dirty in their habits." Whether one boy could hold two or more of these offices is not clear, but probably he could. The last boy or 'dunce' of each form was known as 'custos,' and always had to repeat his lesson first.



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Early rising was enforced. On Sundays and the greater holidays the boys got up at four, for on these days no work was done, but all the Divine Office, as well as High Mass, was attended in the church, and so they had to get up early to be in time for matins at half-past four. On other days, however, they were not obliged to go to matins, and so the ordinary time for getting up was five o'clock; at which hour a prepostor woke up the dormitory, known then as now as Long Chamber, by shouting *Surgite* in a loud voice. They got up at once, and while they dressed recited matins of our Lady. When that was over they made their beds and each swept the part of the chamber near his own bed, after which the prepostor chose four to remove the dust and litter. Then all went two and two in a long line to wash, apparently at the pump in cloisters, and then passed on and took their places in school.

By this time it would be nearly six o'clock, and at that hour the usher came in and prayers were read, all kneeling. These prayers consisted of the Psalm *Misereatur*, Kyrie, Pater, Ave, and three versicles and responds followed by two collects. After prayers the usher began to teach the lower forms, beginning from the first, hearing them repeat the lessons he had given them to prepare. At seven o'clock the headmaster came in, after saying his mass, and reports were at once made to him, by the prepostors on duty, of those who had been late at preparation the evening before or who had not washed properly that morning. Then the day's work began in earnest, and went on till between nine and ten, when a break was made to enable the boys to go across to the church to be present at the Elevation of the High Mass. They knelt down in the church and adored, after which they said the versicle *Adoramus te* and a collect for the founder. Then there would seem

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to have been a break and a few minutes for play, after which at ten they were again summoned into school and more prayers were recited. There is no mention whatever of breakfast, but they must, one would think, have had some food before this.

Dinner was at eleven in the college hall, and the boys marched there, two and two. The provost, the fellows, and the headmaster sat at the high table; the chaplains, the usher, the four upper clerks, and the richer 'commensals' sat at the second table; and the scholars, choristers, and the other 'commensals' at the other tables. The six lower clerks and the thirteen servitors waited at table, and ate afterwards with the servants. During dinner one of the scholars read aloud from the Bible or the lives of the saints. After dinner work began again at twelve o'clock and lasted till three, after which an hour was allowed for play and then another hour for work, at the end of which *Salve Regina*, or the proper Antiphon of our Lady, was said with other prayers as a close to the day's work. Vespers of our Lady were said just before they went in to supper, which took place at five in the hall, served in the same way as dinner. From six to eight preparation went on under the supervision of the prepostors, no master being present. At seven o'clock there was refreshment of some kind, '*potum dimittuntur*.' At eight o'clock all went to bed at the sound of the curfew, first kneeling down by their beds and saying night prayers together. The boys all slept in one long room, the famous 'Long Chamber,' which still exists and is used for the same purpose, though it is now divided up into cubicles. They were taught in a single room below, the present 'Lower School,' which still retains to a remarkable extent its old appearance. All boys over fourteen had a bed to themselves, but the younger boys slept two together.

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Such was the routine of an ordinary working day, and one or two considerations at once present themselves. The first is the small amount of supervision which was exercised and the large extent to which trust was reposed in the older boys. No master seems to have been with them except during the actual hours of school, and none slept with them in the dormitory. At all times out of school the prepostors seem to have been responsible for the maintenance of order and discipline. Secondly, the hours of play seem to modern ideas to have been very short. Half an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon seem to have been all that was thought necessary. However, not every day was a full work day, and, as we shall see presently, they had more time allowed for play in the summer months.

Of the food provided at Eton in those days we have no detailed account. The headmaster's report deals only with the hours and with the work that was done. The statutes tell us nothing except that 10d. a week was the sum to be allowed for the maintenance of each scholar. A little can be gathered from the account-books of the college. Each mess of food was divided between four boys, and was of the value of twopence for the four at each meal, with an extra pennyworth at supper on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. A further sum of 1s. 4d. was allowed in the week for 'bread, drink, oatmeal, and sauce,' so the total sum allowed for every four boys was 3s. 11d. a week. Every 'commensal' who desired to have better food, and who therefore sat at the second table with the chaplains, paid 1s. 8d. a week for the privilege.

The books read in the school in 1560 were as follows:—The lower school read Terence, Æsop's *Fables* (in Latin), and some of Cicero's letters with Lucian's *Dialogues* (in Latin). The fourth-form boys were



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reading Terence, the *Tristia* of Ovid, Martial's *Epigrams*, Catullus, and some of the Latin writings of Sir Thomas More. The fifth form were reading Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Horace, Cicero's *Epistles*, etc. The sixth and seventh forms were reading Cæsar's *Commentaries*, Cicero's *De Officiis* and *De Amicitia*, Virgil and Lucan. A good deal of attention was paid to composition, and especially to writing Latin verses; but Greek grammar was studied only in the higher forms, and no Greek books are mentioned as being read.<sup>1</sup>

Friday was flogging-day, both at Eton and Winchester, and all offences committed during the week seem to have been saved up for punishment on that day. Jonson, the headmaster of Winchester, has some lines on the subject which tend to show how little the method of administering the punishment has varied in the three centuries that have passed since he wrote. The lines would describe accurately the scenes under Hornby and 'Judy' Durnford in the latter part of the last century, even if they do not apply equally accurately to-day:

"Proh! dolor, heu! Veneris lux sanguinolenta propinquat;  
Sanguineamque voco, nam, si peccaveris hujus  
Hebdomadae spatio, poenas patiére cruentas;  
Flecte genu, puerique duo, qui rite vocantur  
Dimittent ligulas, manibusque ligamina solvent."

Saturday was a day of examination on what had been learned during the week. School ended at nine in the morning, and in the afternoon themes were set for the ensuing week.

The 'consuetudinarium' of which we have already spoken, besides giving the details of an ordinary day's

<sup>1</sup> The Reformation had injured the study of Greek. Sir Thomas Pope, founder of Trinity College, Oxford, wrote in 1556: "I remember that when I was a young scholar at Eton the Greek tongue was growing apace, the study of which is now much decayed" (Warton's *Life of Sir T. Pope*, p. 226).



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work, goes through the whole year and recounts the various holidays allowed and the special customs then in vogue; and although more changes seem likely to have been introduced by the Reformation in this matter than in that of the daily routine of work, we yet gather much of the life in Catholic times from what it says. At the opening of the year we should have found the boys enjoying their Christmas holidays, for which, of course, at that time they did not go home. The holidays began on the vigil of St Thomas the Apostle, 20th December, and extended until Twelfth Night, or the Feast of the Epiphany, 6th January. Even in the holidays, however, the boys were not allowed to be entirely idle, but did writing-lessons daily, and further, were accustomed, we are told, to have contests between themselves in verses, epigrams, and speeches, which were carried on quite voluntarily and without any superintendence from the master. The only days which were 'dies non,' on which no work at all was done, were Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and the Epiphany, and before these days the boys went to bed at seven, because they had to be up by four the next morning to go to matins in the church. At this time, too, they were allowed as a very special treat to be in the hall, the only place where there was a fire, and to play there both before and after supper. On New Year's Day they gave each other small presents.

Shrovetide, or Carnival, was the next period of special observances, and was ushered in on Monday by a holiday from nine o'clock onwards. On this day there was a custom, which lasted on into the nineteenth century, of hanging up sets of verses composed by the senior scholars in praise of Bacchus. The original subject was given up long ago, but the name of 'Bacchus verses' was retained to the middle of the last century.

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Thus Mr Pepys, visiting the school in the year 1665, the year of the great plague, found the boys "writing verses *de peste*, it being their custom to make verses at Shrove Tide." The next day, Shrove Tuesday, was a holiday from eight o'clock onwards, and there was a custom at Eton, as elsewhere all over England, of tormenting some bird. Cock-fighting and throwing at cocks were the usual pastimes elsewhere, but at Eton it was a crow that was put to death. It was brought in by the cook, and fastened up to the door with a pancake attached to it. The young crows lately hatched and deprived of their parents were placed close by, and their cries seem to have added much to the general enjoyment.

On Ash Wednesday the boys went to church at ten, and all were bound to go to confession between that day and the next Sunday, choosing their own confessor from among the fellows and chaplains. A record was apparently kept by these of the names of the boys who had been to them.

School work ceases again on the Wednesday before Easter, though writing-lessons were still given daily as at Christmas. Tenebræ was attended at four o'clock on this day and on the other days of Holy Week, and the ceremonies of Holy Week were carried out in the church. Easter week was holiday time, and no work at all was done except writing-lessons on the last three days. After Low Sunday the ordinary routine began again.

On May Day those who wished got up early, at four, and went out maying, and brought back the branches to decorate the windows of the dormitory. Five days later came the Feast of St John Port-Latin, and from that day summer was supposed to have begun and more playtime was allowed, for the boys were allowed to

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take a siesta after dinner until the entry of the masters, and there was 'bever' (consisting probably of bread and beer) at three o'clock. After supper play was allowed every night from seven to eight.

Ascension Day began the only real holiday of the year, and from that day till Corpus Christi, a period of three weeks, those who were "carried away by the desire of visiting their parents or friends" were allowed to go home. There is no statement as to what was done by those who had to spend their holidays at school.

Midsummer Day, the Feast of St John the Baptist, on 24th June, was always a great day in mediæval England, and as elsewhere, so also at Eton, a bonfire was the principal feature of it. Elsewhere the bonfire seems always to have been lighted on the eve, but at Eton it is definitely stated to have been on the day itself. It was made in the college yard, near the east end of the chapel. The boys did not get to bed that night till nine, and so were allowed to stay in bed till six the next morning. The same ceremonies were repeated a few days later for St Peter and St Paul, and on 6th July, the Feast of the Translation of St Thomas of Canterbury, there was again a bonfire.

The great event in July was the election of the scholars to fill the vacancies at King's, and the provost of King's and others of the fellows, to later generations known as 'posers,' came down to make the necessary examination. So for five days, while they were at Eton, no work was done after dinner. August brought the Feast of the Assumption and the great pilgrimage to our Lady of Eton. This was the greatest day in all the year. Then came the end of summer privileges, which ceased on the Beheading of St John, 29th August. After that day there was no more 'bever' or



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siesta, and the evening play-hour from seven to eight was taken away.

September brought the nuts, and on some day at the choice of the master, on or about Holy Cross Day, 14th September, the boys all went nutting. However, before they were allowed this privilege they had to write verses, describing in a strain of lamentation the deadly cold, '*letalìa frigora*' of the winter that was coming, and praising, by way of contrast, the 'apple-bearing autumn' they were still enjoying. One can imagine that in days when there was but one fire in college, and that in the hall, and seldom lighted except on feast-days "in honour of God or of His Mother or of some other saint," the cold in winter must have been deadly indeed; but it was rather unkind to remind the boys so soon of the horrors that were coming.

Three special customs of Eton seem to call for special notice. The first was the procession *ad montem*, which became so famous in later years. At this time it took place not, as afterwards, on Tuesday in Whitsun Week, but in January, on some day chosen by the headmaster, about the Conversion of St Paul. The description given is worth translating, although the ceremony was very different in these early days from that which was so well known in the early part of the last century, until it was finally given up in 1847.

"About the feast of the Conversion of St Paul at nine o'clock, on a day chosen by the master, the boys go *ad montem* in the same manner in which they go to gather nuts in September. The Hill is a sacred spot to the youthful devotion of Etonians, and on account of the beauty of the spot, the pleasant sward, the cool shade and the song of the birds, they dedicate it to Apollo and the Muses, celebrate it in song, call it Tempe and extol it above Helicon. Here the novices who have not yet



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for a whole year served manfully and bravely in the Eton ranks, are first sprinkled with salt and then admirably described in verses which have all the wit (*salety*) and humour that is possible. Then they make epigrams on the new boys, each striving to surpass the other in smoothness and wit. They may say whatever comes into their mouths, provided only it is free from coarseness and scurrility. Lastly, they wet their cheeks with salt tears and then at last they are initiated into the ranks of veterans. Speeches and small triumphs follow, and the new boys rejoice in that their troubles are over, and that they are initiated into the ranks of such clever companions. They come home at five and after supper play till eight."

Here there certainly does not seem to be much trace either of a pilgrimage to our Lady or the ceremonies of the boy-bishop, both of which have been suggested as being the origin of 'Montem.' But the religious character, if there had ever been any, could scarcely have been entirely lost as early as 1560, and we must conclude that the custom did not originate in any religious ceremony.

The boy-bishop was known at Eton, though not on Montem Day. He was elected on St Hugh's Day, and it was on St Nicholas' Day, 6th December, the birthday of Henry VI, not, as elsewhere, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, that the usual ceremonies were carried out in the church. Probably the boy-bishop held some kind of rule in the school right on to Childermas Day, for 'my lord of mischief' is mentioned in the accounts, but at Eton he officiated in church on one day only, and that St Nicholas' Day and not Childermas.

This brings us to one more custom for which Eton was famous, and that was the Christmas play. The

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headmaster chose the play to be acted about the beginning of November, and it was performed publicly at Christmas. These plays seem to have been usually in Latin, but sometimes in English. Indeed, the first comedy in English which has come down to us, *Ralph Roister Doister*, was written by an Eton headmaster, Nicholas Udal, and was almost certainly acted by Eton boys. The account-books of the period are full of items of expenses incurred for the players; *e.g.* "1552. To the Schoolmaster for beards for the players VI<sup>s</sup>. VIII<sup>d</sup>., " and so on.

What other amusements the boys had is not very easy to say. There is no mention of games in the statutes or in the consuetudinary. Indeed, the first list which is extant of games in vogue at Eton would seem to be as late as 1760, and is found in an MS. drawn up by some boy and entitled *Nugæ Etonenses*. The list is a curious one, and includes a good many which a modern Etonian would think beneath his dignity:—Cricket, Fives, Shirking Walls, Scrambling Walls, Bally Cally, Battledores, Peg Tops, Peg in the Ring, Goals, Hop Scotch, Heading, Conquering Lobs, Hoops, Marbles, Trap Ball, Steel Baggage, Puss in the Corner, Cut Gallows, Kites, Cloyster and Flyer Gigs, Tops, Humming Tops, Hunt the Hare, Hunt the Dark Lantern, Chuck, Sinks, Stare-caps, Hurtlecap.<sup>1</sup>

Cricket, in anything like its present form, is of course a very recent invention, but fives may well have been played at Eton in Catholic days. No one can look at the buttresses of the chapel in the schoolyard, and especially at the last one, where are the steps leading up to the north door, without at once seeing what was the origin of the Eton game of fives. There is a perfect

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Mr Maxwell Lyte, *History of Eton*, p. 226.

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fives court, with the step in the floor, the 'pepper-box,' and every other detail complete.<sup>1</sup> Modern Eton fives courts are simply reproductions of this, the mother of them all; just as all tennis courts, properly so called, are the reproduction of the details of some baronial courtyard in France; and since this court must have been there in Catholic times, there would seem to be no reason why the game should not also have existed. Football or 'goals' was certainly played in London in very early times, and is one of the most ancient of English games. At Winchester there is mention of a game which may have been cricket, but sounds more like battledore or shuttlecock, or even the modern game of lawn tennis. *Sæpe reperiçusso pila te juvat icta bacillo*. Lastly, there was the river, and when English boys of any age find themselves near a river, we may expect that there would be bathing, boating, and fishing to be had. Of the first we have direct evidence, for one of the scholars named Robert Sacheverell was drowned in 1549. He went from 'ye playing-lease' to bathe at 'ye watering-place' with some of his companions, but was carried away by the stream to a place known as 'ye whirlpoll,' and so met his death. The jurors at the inquest therefore found that "that water was accursed, and so was the cause of his death. On whose soul may God have mercy." Again, in *Vulgaria Puerorum*, a phrase-book in English and Latin, written by William Horman, Vice-Provost of Eton 1502-3, and probably meant for use in the school, we have the sentence, "Children do learn to swim leaning on the rind of a tree or cork," which seems to point to the method of tuition in swimming then customary at Eton.

<sup>1</sup> Fives was actually played between the buttresses of the chapel till the new courts were built in 1847.



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## THE OPPIDANS

Mention has already been made of the 'commensals' who later became the 'oppidans.' They existed from the first, though it is difficult to say in what numbers, and royalty itself, in the person of Henry VII, has been claimed, though perhaps doubtfully, as having been found in their number. They were already living in the town outside the college walls in 1479, for in that year we have a couple of very curious letters written by William Paston, who was finishing his education at Eton as a lad of nineteen. We find the exact system already in vogue which has continued to within living memory. He lives in the town with a lady whom he speaks of as 'my hostess,' the earlier name apparently for the 'dame' of later years. But he has a 'tutor' also, one Mr Thomas Stephenson, who was one of the Fellows of Eton at the time, and therefore a priest and living within the college walls. The term 'my tutor' is not yet in vogue, but he speaks of him as 'my creanser,' a term which is explained to be the equivalent of tutor by the contemporary statutes of Magdalen College, Oxford.

Some light on the cost of keeping a boy at Eton in those days may be gathered from a bill for a school-account sent in by the usher or lower master of Eton in 1554, which by an odd chance has survived to the present time—the earliest Eton boy's bill on record, if not the earliest of all such documents that have come down to us. Sir William Dethick, to whom this bill was sent, was Garter King-of-Arms, and his boy Nicholas was at this time sixteen years of age. The bill has been preserved quite accidentally, because Garter happened to make a note on the back with reference to the installation of Lord William Howard as a Knight of

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the Garter on the 31st January 1554, and the ceremonies which were then to be observed. This note fixes the date of the bill, which is itself undated.

Mr Garter. After most hearty commendations unto you, these shall be to let you understand that the commons are raised iid weekly on every commensal. So that the same for Nicholas your son cometh to xvis. Other expenses for washing and other necessities are particularly mentioned underneath:—

Imp'mis for store money	iis viiid
It'm for washinge	xvid
Item for paper	viiid
It'm for candles	iiid
It'm for this Q'rters stipend	vis viiid
	Sma. xis viiid

I am bold to trouble your Mastership with my Pres. at this present because I must pay a great deal of money now out of hand. I pray you send it by the bringer or else next week by one of your servants.

Yours to command to his power

WILL<sup>A</sup>M GRENE

Usher of Eton.

Greatly as the school has changed in the four hundred and seventy-five years of its existence, no Etonian can read these memorials of its early days without seeing that many of its present customs date back to those centuries. The old statutes remained nominally in force until 1870, although for many years they had not been strictly followed. Still, the life of a collegier before that date—and there are still many alive and with us now—must have been very like that of a mediæval

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schoolboy in many ways. Now, however, the Royal Commission has swept away the old statutes, changed the constitution of the college, and done away with much that had survived from past centuries. Perhaps it was better so, for the intentions of the founder had long been ignored, and the very idea of the constant and glorious worship of Almighty God, which had been in the forefront of his mind, had passed away. Eton survives, a school great and influential beyond its founder's dreams, but the great collegiate church of our Lady at Eton is nothing more, nowadays, than a school chapel, inadequate in size to accommodate all its members.



## CHAPTER IV

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS UNDER THE PENAL LAWS.

#### THE SECULAR SCHOOLS

THE establishment of Protestantism in England under Queen Elizabeth led on at once to the enactment of severe laws against all who remained faithful to the older religion. Catholics were not merely deprived of their churches and preferments, and of the schools and colleges they had already founded; were not merely forbidden under penalty of death to celebrate Holy Mass or even to be present at such a celebration; but were forbidden also to found new schools or to teach their children at home, under a penalty of £10 for each month, if a schoolmaster was kept who did not conform. The schoolmaster himself in such a case was liable to a year's imprisonment, and to be forbidden ever to teach anywhere in future. Both were at the mercy of any 'common informer' who wished to earn £100, the equivalent of perhaps £500 at the present time.

No doubt, in spite of these enactments, the process of education among Catholics was not entirely brought to a close. Although it was evidently impossible to keep in being anything which could be called an actual school—for the unusual assembling of boys together would soon have given the clue to some informer, and the school would very speedily have been brought to an end,—yet many a nobleman and country gentleman must have managed by some system of camouflage to

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keep a tutor in his house for the education of his children, in spite of the risk that he ran. But, even so, it was clearly quite impossible in this way to keep up any supply of priests and missionaries. Either England must be entirely abandoned to Protestantism, without an effort to save it, or some kind of college must be set up upon the Continent, beyond the reach of Elizabeth and her laws. There priests might be educated for the English mission, and from thence they could be sent forth, as opportunity might offer, at the continual risk of a cruel martyrdom, to keep the faith alive in England, and to minister the sacraments to the oppressed remnant of Catholics.

This was the problem which confronted Allen, the leader of the proscribed band of Catholic priests, chiefly Oxford men, who were gathered together in Flanders at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. They were a distinguished body of men, refugees principally from New College and from Exeter College at Oxford, who had gathered together at Douay—where Philip II had recently founded a new university,—because its Chancellor, Richard Smith, was himself an Oxford man. He had been a Fellow of Merton, and formerly Regius Professor of Divinity. Another Fellow of an Oxford college was at the head of the important Marchiennes College, Richard White, Fellow of New College; and, further, the Professor of Civil Law at the new university was Owen Lewis, who also in former days had held a fellowship at New College. Oxford influence was therefore already dominant at Douay, and no more favourable ground could be found anywhere for the establishment of an English college to replace, as far as that was possible, the Oxford that had been lost.

By 1573, four years after the excommunication of Elizabeth by St Pius V, it was evident that something

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must be done to provide new priests, unless the faith in England was to be allowed to die out altogether. The priests who had been ordained under King Henry and Queen Mary were growing old, and there was no means of replacing them. A seminary of some kind, probably eventually several such in different places, was a necessity, and Allen determined to make a start with a college at Douay, in connection with the new university, and manned by the Oxford men who had made their escape from England and were ready to his hand. It is worth while noting the list of those whom he gathered together for this purpose, for it brings home to us how much the new college at Douay was the continuation, under different circumstances, of the old Catholic Oxford of the past. Here is the list of some of the Oxford men:—

Richard Smith, Fellow of Merton. Chancellor of the University.

Richard White, Fellow of New College. Principal of Marchiennes College.

Owen Lewis, Fellow of New College. Professor of Canon Law.

Morgan Phillips, Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College.

Richard Bristow, Fellow of Exeter.

William Allen, Fellow of Oriel. Principal of St Mary's Hall.

John Howlett, Fellow of Exeter.

John Marshall, Fellow of New College, and Usher of Winchester.

Thomas Stapleton, Fellow of New College.

Thomas Ford, Fellow of Trinity.

Thomas Dorman, Fellow of All Souls'.

Gregory Martin, Fellow of St John's.

Edmund Campion, Fellow of St John's.

Edward Resden, M.A. of Exeter College.

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There were also a number of others, who had been educated at Oxford or elsewhere, but had not actually been elected to fellowships. Among these may be mentioned John White, John Wright of York, Thomas Darell of New College, Richard Storey, Stephen Tennant, and Thomas Wilson. All the last three were priests already ordained who lived at their own charges. From Cambridge, oddly enough, there is scarcely one single name that has come down to us.

### THE ENGLISH COLLEGE AT DOUAY

With such material to draw upon, the staffing of the new college presented no difficulty. In 1579 the first step was taken by taking a hired house of considerable size, situated not far from the theological schools. It came to be known as '*Les Grands Anglais*.'

The house, as thus started, was in its first intention a seminary rather than a school. Its first inmates were young men of some twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, who had already finished their course in the humanities and now were ready to commence their studies in theology at the university. But it was not long before the necessity for receiving boys of a younger age became evident. Gentlemen's sons who were studying humanities, philosophy, and jurisprudence at the university, and who had no idea of becoming priests, were received from a very early date. It is with these that our special interest connects itself, for it was thus that the tradition of the English Catholic schools was handed on, when now there were no Catholic schools at all left anywhere in England.

The earliest provision for boys in connection with the college was made through the Jesuits, who had



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already established a philosophical school at Rheims. In 1580 this school was serving, to quote the Rheims Diary, as "a kind of philosophical boys' school to the English College." The college itself, we must note, had by that time moved temporarily to Rheims, to avoid political disturbances. Besides this school of the Jesuits, other schools were being used for the same purpose, for Allen, writing in 1583 to Mr George Gilbert, mentions Pont le Mousson, Eu, and Verdun as other places where such students could obtain the instruction suitable for boys.

In 1593 political difficulties were so far at an end that the college was able to return once more from Rheims to its old quarters at Douay, and from this time onward younger boys were regularly received, and a suitable course of instruction was instituted for them in the college itself. Once more Catholics had a school of their own, carried on openly and efficiently, though not on the soil of England.

We have no very detailed account of the college at Douay at this period. The 'Diaries,' which are almost our only source of information, do not concern themselves with the details of daily life. The earliest account we have is no earlier than the beginning of the eighteenth century, and is contained in a pamphlet by a Roman Catholic, who, though he describes himself as a Protestant chaplain taken to Douay by the wars of Marlborough, was really no other than the Rev. Hugh Footell, the author of *Dodds' Church History of England*. This is his account of the college at that date. It is not likely to have changed very much from the routine of its earlier years.

"The College as to the building is very mean and low, excepting the refectory, or room where they dine, which is a large cheerful structure, . . . with a large

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extent of ground, employed in gardens, of which there are four in number.

“The Church is but small, proportioned to the rest of the College, ’tis dedicated to Thomas Beckett. . . . It is beautiful with a fine organ. . . . The College has two libraries, one for the students in Divinity, the other is chiefly made up of classic authors. . . . Every scholar (excepting they are very young) has a private chamber to himself, notwithstanding which several prefects and superiors have arbitrary access by means of a common key. There is a very decent infirmary for the sick, at some distance from the College, with a prefect and servants to attend them, a physician and an apothecary.

“Five masters are allotted for what they call Humanity; two for Philosophy and two for Theology. What we call the Accidence they call Figures, which they divide into two years, one for the lower, the second for the higher; the third for grammar; the fourth for Syntax; the fifth for Poetry; the sixth for Rhetoric, which, with two years Philosophy and four years Theology, make up twelve years.

“They have different rooms for their schools, which they every year remove into, according as they advance in their studies. They have daily, monthly, and yearly exercises or experiments of learning, both public and private, which provokes the scholars with laudable emulation to run with courage through the tedious paths of learning. They are obliged to do about an hour’s devotion every morning, and every day is in like manner finished by public prayer: and, as I take it, their hours of rising and going to bed are five and nine.

“This College entertains no foreigners, yet there are a mixture of English in it; some designed for the Church,

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others persons of figure and plentiful fortunes in their country; some of mean parentage, others of the prime nobility; and yet the discipline of the College runs so that there is not the least distinction observable, either in dress, diet, or apartment. If there is any preference or partiality it is only when a singular progress in their studies recommends them. The house is governed by a President, who is constantly named by the Pope. He enjoys his place for life, and his power is arbitrary in punishing and rewarding, though he governs according to the standing rules of the College and seldom acts in matters of moment without the advice of a council of Seniors.

“Their dress is uniform, black cassocks, surtouts plaited upon the shoulders and collar bands. They eat thrice a day. Their breakfast is bread and butter, at dinner they have half a pound of meat; at supper the same; with double the quantity upon Sundays and holidays. Their bread and beer is of the best sort, and of this they may have a discretion.”

In the year 1770 the inconvenience alluded to in this account, arising from the small size of the college, which had continued for two hundred years, ever since its foundation by Allen, was remedied by a complete rebuilding of the whole. The new college as it was then constructed still exists, and now forms one side of the “Place des Grands Anglais” at Douay. It is a handsome structure of white stone with a chapel at one extremity.

But evil days were close at hand. It was only twenty years after the completion of the new buildings that, in the year 1793, owing to the troubles consequent on the French Revolution, the college had to be closed and removed to England. What happened to it there will be told hereafter.



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## THE SECULAR COLLEGE OF ST OMERS

During the latter part of the period during which the college of Douay existed there was a second college close by, at St Omers, which was also in secular hands. It had begun as an English college of Jesuits, and we shall have more to say about it in this character later on, but in 1762 the French Government determined on the expulsion of the Jesuits from France, and the English Jesuits of St Omers were not exempted. They accordingly moved secretly to Bruges, and later on to Liege, while the college of St Omers, which they had left, was handed over to the English secular clergy of Douay, who were considerably blamed by some for accepting it, and was carried on by them as a preparatory school for some twenty years. It never flourished under the seculars, for the old pupils followed their Jesuit masters to Belgium, and there was no real need for this second secular college. Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator, was the most distinguished alumnus produced by the college under secular auspices.

A prospectus of the school at this period has survived, and gives information which is interesting and enlightening. Boys, we find, were admitted from nine to eleven years of age, and were expected at least to be able to read with fluency. The terms were twenty-five pounds a year, and were payable always a quarter in advance. Each student paid one guinea as entrance-money, and had to bring with him two good suits of clothes, six shirts, four pairs of stockings, four pocket handkerchiefs. Anything more that was needed would be provided and charged to account.

For this sum of twenty-five pounds a year, Latin, Greek, English, and French were taught, as well as writing, arithmetic, and geography. "Table, Bed and



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clothes, Washing, Fire, Candle, School books, Pens, Ink, Paper are provided ; also Physician, Surgeon and Drugs in all slight disorders ; and every student is allowed 6d each a week for pocket money." Drawing, dancing, and music were extras, and charged about five shillings a month.

The colleges of Douay and of St Omers were both confiscated by the revolutionists in 1793. In each case the occupants were thrown into prison and kept there under trying circumstances for a lengthened period. After that they were released and came to England. But the story of their sufferings and of their subsequent action belongs rather to the history of St Edmund's College at Ware than to the present chapter.

## THE JESUIT COLLEGES ON THE CONTINENT

### THE COLLEGE OF ST OMERS

The outstanding event in the educational world of the sixteenth century was the entry into the scholastic ranks of the Society of Jesus. It constituted nothing less than a revolution, and carried all before it. In England, indeed, the Society could of course do nothing, but it swept the Continent from end to end in all those countries that remained Catholic. Its success was brilliant, overwhelming. In two generations it had dominated the Catholic world, and was educating everywhere the sons of the noblest families of Europe as well as boys drawn from all the lower ranks of society. Nothing like it had ever been seen before in all the history of education.

The reason of this overwhelming success was that for the first time, with an adequate force to support it in

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material matters, and with an enthusiasm equal to that with which the Society was at the same time entering into the fields of theology and controversy, a system of education was put forward which was well planned and carefully thought out. Education, which before had been unorganised and without proper system, was put on scientific lines. Under the rule of the fifth General of the Society, Claudius Acquaviva, the whole system was planned out. Picked Jesuits from every nation were summoned to Rome in 1584 and set to consider the suggestions put forward from every province of the Society. The report which they drew up was sent to be examined, and in its turn reported upon, by at least five picked men in every province. Not till every suggestion had been considered and new ideas had been tested by experience for many years, was the final *Ratio Studiorum*, which gave the authoritative plan of all studies to be undertaken by the Society, given to the world. It was not to be wondered at that a plan, to the details of which such care had been given, and which was so loyally worked by such able officers, had at once so startling a success. The *Ratio Studiorum* appeared in 1599. Before 1610 the Society were already directing not less than three hundred colleges in different parts of Europe.

Jesuit education was everywhere rigorously gratuitous. No scholar, however poor, was refused, if of good character and able to read and write. The boarding-houses were few in number, and for these a suitable charge was made. Their inmates went out to school, to the great day-schools of the Order in the city. Most of the pupils lived at home. It soon became evident to the Society that some special provision ought to be made by them for English Catholic boys, who were now unable to obtain Catholic education at home. To do

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this in England was impossible, so it was determined to start a college on the Continent as near as possible to the coast. On the 18th September 1592, almost at the same moment at which definite provision was made for boys at the secular college of Douay, Fr. Robert Persons, the most active of all the English members of the Society, succeeded in opening a college at St Omers, some twenty-four miles from the town of Calais.

“The first beginnings of the College,” writes Fr. John Gerard, “promised no longevity. The new establishment met, of course, with the most unrelenting persecution at the hands of the English Government; it was mentioned by name in the Royal proclamations against the Catholic seminaries; it was declared to be high treason for parents to send their children thither, and the boys on their way to school were liable to arrest and imprisonment. Meanwhile the College itself was infested by English spies, who sought to discover against whom information might be laid.” The authorities of St Omers were by no means too friendly. They tried to limit the number of scholars at first to eight or ten, and afterwards to sixteen. They insisted that the rector must never be an Englishman, lest he should give treasonable information to an English force, and arm his boys against their Belgium hosts. Nevertheless the school flourished. It had the powerful support of Philip II, in whose dominions it lay, and it started with thirty-three pupils, to be increased before long to more than a hundred, and by 1622 to something like two hundred. It was by far the most important of the English schools on the Continent, and gave no doubt much the most efficient education.

We have a description of a Jesuit school about 1645 from the pen of John Dury the Puritan. All the Jesuit



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colleges were open to visitors, so John Dury was able to enter and study the system for himself.

1. *Arrangement of the Schoolroom and the Scholars.*—“The School itself is of an oblong square figure, commonly hung round with pictures or maps, divided into two parts, viz.: into Oriental and Occidental, and whatever places there are on the one side, there are as many and the same on the other. The Regent’s pulpit is between both, from which there is a vacant alley to the door, according to this platforme :

“At (A) is the door, (B) the Regent’s pulpit, (C) the seats of the Censors, (E) the chair of the Emperor of the West, (D) of the East: oooo the Senators on each side of the Emperors, (XXXX) the Equites, whereof he that is next the Senators is called *Princeps Equitum*, (IIII) the *Comites*, whereof he that is next the Emperor is called *Primus Comitum*. The low benches marked with Arithmetical figures are called *Decuriæ*, the chief whereof is called *Decurio*.”

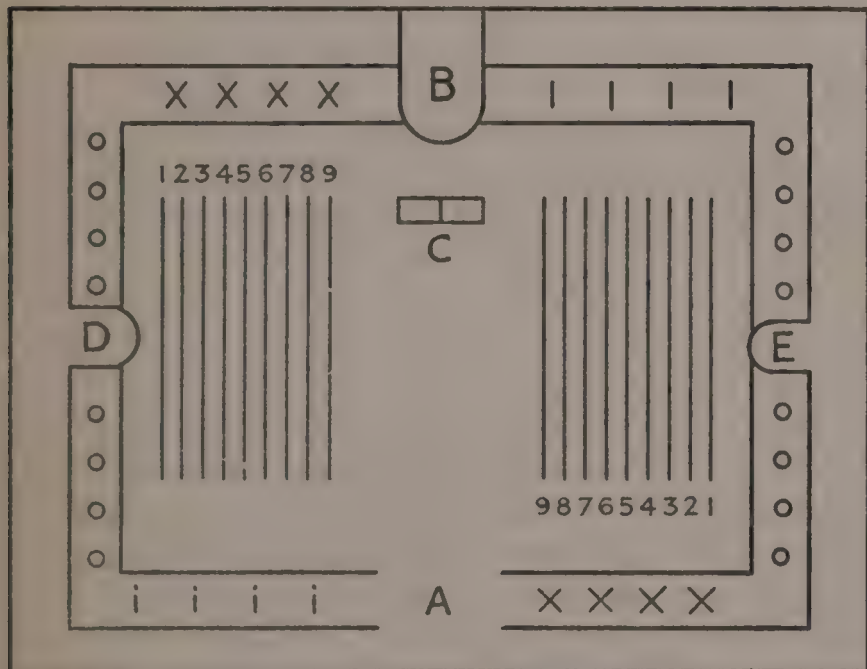
2. *Hearing of Lessons followed by the Prælectio.*—“The Regent either opening his pulpit or walking into the Alley, biddeth any whom he most suspecteth of negligence to render his lesson; as, suppose, the first *Decurio* of the East. The first *Decurio* of the East and also he of the West both rise together: he of the East sayeth the lesson, he of the West correcteth him where he misses: and then the *Decurio* of the West sayeth also and is corrected in like manner by his fellow opposite of the East. The Regent spendeth near half an hour in this business, which having done he giveth another lesson out of the same author into the vernacular tongue, and in the higher classes the Greek into Latin. They write also such glosses, comments, analyses and other explications in their margents as the Regent dictates according to the capacity of the respective classes.”



## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS UNDER PENAL LAWS

We have another description of St Omers from the pen of James Wadsworth in his *English Spanish Pilgrim*, which was published in 1630. He gives us the regular routine of the day :

“Every morning the fifth hour summons them up. The first half is bestowed in making up themselves and their beds. The place where they sleep is called a



PLAN OF A CLASSROOM IN A JESUIT COLLEGE.

(After a drawing by John Dury, circa 1645.)

dormitory, which contains three long galleries topping the house; each of these is furnished with fifty beds, distanced only by a partition of boards. The next half hour the Chapel doth challenge their attendance, the Mass their devotion, whoever is absent shall be sure to have the unwelcome presence of Father Thunder. At six they all go to study in a large hall under the first gallery, where according to order each one takes his seat, where they study for an hour, and in the midst

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walks Father Thunder and sees they all keep silence and are diligent at their books. All are bound to be there without budging. At seven, which is their hour of breakfast, they go down two by two with their books under their arms, and first those in Rhetoric, into the refectory, where everyone hath for his part a piece of bread and butter and beer as pleaseth him. The loss of this breakfast is their punishment whose names have been given up to the Prefect for having spoken English the day before.

“From seven and a half till nine and better, they are exercised in repeating and showing what composures they have made; after which time the Prefects and Masters leave the schools and the students of the three under schools go up to those of the upper, which read them Greek until ten, at which hour everyone betakes him to his study until eleven, as in the morning before; then to dinner. After they have ranged themselves awhile, the Rector and Fathers enter. The elder says grace himself or ordains another, which done he places himself at the upper end of the table, the others in their order.

. . . . .  
“Now let us come to the Collegiates or students and their diet. First they are served in by seven of their own rank, weekly and in course, and according to seniority each man has first brought him a mess of broth, which is the antepast, afterwards half a pound of beef, which they call their portion; after an apple or piece of cheese for their postpast, bread and beer as they call for it. . . . Next after, until one of the clock they recreate themselves in the garden, then each man to his study until two, then again to the schools, so until four and a half, (as in the morning) at their Greek and Latin exercises, then again to their studies until

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six, which is supper time. . . . One of the students reads the Latin Martyrology and another after him the English, which contains the legends of our English Martyrs and traitors together, sometimes two in one day. . . . After this until seven and a half music; until eight they recreate themselves together, thence to their studies again until half an hour be past, so to their litanies and to provide themselves for to bed, but before they do it for the most part they demand on their knees all the Prefect's blessings, otherwise they take not themselves blest. Then, while they are disrobing themselves, one among them reads them some miracle or new book, until sleep close up all, and Father Thunder's noise awake them in the morning."

"Discipline is here enough and well bestowed. Thus they pass their days and years, save Tuesdays and Thursdays when on the afternoons they are licensed to the recreation of the open fields, in this wise: dinner ended, we march forth of the College by two and two, Fr Thunder himself carrying up the rear, until we are distant about a mile from the town, where we walk, or play at ball or bowls or such other game, till the clock and our stomachs strike supper time, whence, repairing to the College, roast mutton is our provision, being not ordinary." On Saturdays all confessed, and on Sunday morning they rose at six. The Sodality of our Lady, for approved students only, was at seven, followed by Mass and communion. They went again to vespers and litanies for the conversion of England in the afternoon.

Such, then, was the routine in the college of St Omers for nearly two centuries. But Jesuits are never allowed to go long without trouble: the prayers of St Ignatius, who promised to pray that his Order might have 'tribulation,' have always been answered abund-



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antly. In 1762 the Parlement of Paris declared war against the Society, and the college of St Omers was involved, for St Omers had become French territory in 1659. The college itself was to be preserved, for the presence of so many English boys was a valuable asset and produced much money, but the teaching staff was to be changed. The victims, however, got wind of the plot and determined by a bold step to transfer themselves and their pupils bodily to Bruges, in the Austrian Netherlands, where they hoped to find a refuge.

The operation was carried out with skill and promptitude. Each day boys went out as if for an ordinary walk, and never returned. The first day fifty-two of the youngest were thus taken across the frontier, and others followed on later days. Meanwhile, the usual supply of provisions was ordered in, so that no suspicion was aroused. The boys travelled in waggons and canal boats which had been prepared beforehand, and successfully negotiated the Custom-house, arriving at Bruges on the evening of the second day after leaving St Omers. The whole college was thus transplanted without the loss of a single boy. But it was a dismal change. They found nothing prepared for them, and had at first to sup without spoon or fork, and to lie on straw mattresses on the floor. Better accommodation was, however, soon forthcoming.

### THE COLLEGE AT BRUGES

There was in the High Street of Bruges a large building described as a great and noble structure, 'the House of the Seven Towers,' where formerly the King of France had lodged when he came to Flanders. This was bought and fitted up, and so within a month from

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their arrival the college found itself once more in adequate surroundings. Even so, however, it was but a sorry substitute for the beautiful building they had left behind at St Omers. However, Bruges was not to be their home for a very long period, for the troubles which had driven them from St Omers were by no means ended.

The Bourbon sovereigns, who at that time were supreme over almost the whole of Catholic Europe, had banded themselves against the Society of Jesus, which had become too powerful for their liking, and had set to work to procure its suppression. On the 16th August 1773, Clement XIV, yielding to this united pressure, most unwillingly signed the decree. The Society of Jesus was suppressed, its members released from their vows, and its property sequestrated, while the authorities of the various states of Christendom were directed to see to the execution of what had been thus decreed. The Pope had yielded to force, he could not do other than he did, but the suppression was only an administrative measure, not a judicial sentence based on judicial inquiry. Even before it was issued the Jesuits had already been driven out of Portugal, Spain, France, Naples, and Parma by the autocratic powers of the sovereigns of those countries.

But however anxious the Austrian authorities at Bruges were to get rid of the Jesuits, they were anxious, like the authorities at St Omers, to keep the boys. They summoned the English Dominicans from Bornhem, and commanded them to take control. But they had not reckoned on the spirit of English boys. The pupils broke at once into open revolt, declaring that they would obey none but those to whom their parents had entrusted them. Their Jesuit masters were in prison, and no one else could control them, though various

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other teachers were brought in to help the Dominicans in their thankless task. Parents began to arrive from England and to claim their sons. The town authorities at last gave up the attempt to continue the struggle, relieved the Dominicans of their charge, and closed the establishment.

### THE GENTLEMEN OF LIEGE

It must have seemed at the moment as if the English Jesuit schools had received their deathblow. The Society of Jesus was suppressed; the college at Bruges had suffered the same fate as that of St Omers; the boys were scattered, and their masters for some time detained in prison. No catastrophe, one would have thought, could have been more complete or more beyond possibility of recovery.

It so happened, however, that the English Jesuits had established in 1616, some fifty years before the suppression, a house at Liege for the purpose of the religious training of the members of their own Society. This house, of course, was involved with all the rest in the general suppression, but in this one case the hand which executed the decree was favourable to the Society. Liege was under the rule of the Prince-Bishop, Mgr Welbruck, a warm friend of this English house, and he owed no allegiance to any civil power. Therefore, although, as he was bound to do, he formally executed his commission—announcing the suppression, freeing the religious from their vows, and taking the house and property into his own hands—he made no attempt to disturb the inmates or to change the character of the work that was being done. Fr John Howard, the former rector, remained in charge under the Prince-Bishop, and the other members of the



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Community continued as before, carrying on their old work for the benefit of the English mission.

The news of this unexpected survival soon spread, and to the shelter of Liege there soon came together the scattered members of the college of Bruges. It was not only the masters who thus found a refuge, but many also of the boys. We can trace their arrival from the day-book of the Liege College. On 7th October seven came in, then others in parties of two or three. Some of the boys who had gone to England began to return and to rejoin their companions. On 4th November, within three months of the beginning of the trouble, a formal reopening of the schools took place, with the sanction of the Prince-Bishop, who gave the new college the name of 'the English Academy.' It was just as if the boys had returned from a somewhat prolonged summer holiday. Father Howard, indeed, was the rector of the new house, in place of Father Angier of Bruges, but the post of first prefect was still filled by Father Morgan, and many of the old masters were there to take up once more their former classes. The school flourished more than ever, though its chiefs had no longer the right to describe themselves as Jesuits, and in 1776, three years only after its institution, it numbered no less than one hundred and fifty pupils.

The building in which the college was lodged still exists, at least in great part. It is now called the 'Hôpital civil des Anglais,' while the street in which it was situated for some time bore the name of the 'Rue des Jésuites Anglais.' It lies outside the town, with a garden, now allowed to run utterly wild, straggling up the hill to the back. After the flat surroundings of Bruges, where they never had been really comfortable, the more pleasant and commodious situation in which



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they found themselves at Liege seemed nothing less than, to use their own words, 'an earthly Paradise.'

But here, again, they were not long suffered to remain in peace. Times had changed vastly since their first establishment at St Omers in 1594. Then, they were outlaws in England, liable to execution as traitors if they were caught anywhere on English territory, obliged to seek an asylum and a home to carry on their school on the Continent and under the protection of Catholic France and Spain. Now, France itself had become the most dangerous place for them in all Europe, for the Revolution was in full blast, and they, as not only Catholics but also Englishmen, were more in danger than any others. The power of the Prince-Bishop was tottering, the revolutionary armies were already marching against Liege, and there remained nothing to be done but to seek safety once more in flight. By a strange reversal of the past, England now offered the safest refuge to be found.

On the 14th July 1793 the resolution was taken and the flight began. "Liege," says Fr Keating in his *History of Stonyhurst*, "was thronged with the beaten remnants of the Allied armies, whose retreat it was that made the position untenable; and the soldiery, as a matter of course, seized for their own use what even was of service for transport. Luckily the most valuable portions of the library had been previously sent away, and boats had been secured, but it was impossible to obtain the services of more than one horse to convey goods to them. Even this solitary animal was repeatedly seized by the military and pressed into their own service, but was each time recovered by the agency of a former pupil, O'Shee by name, who was acting as aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-Chief, the Prince of Wurtemberg."

The voyage down the Meuse then began, but before

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they had gone very far the way was blocked by a pontoon-bridge which the retreating army of the Allies had thrown across the river. Then one of the boats began to leak badly; but luckily the party fell in with a French emigrant, the Count d'Agram, whose son had been at the college, and he shared his boat with them. Finally, however, after many hardships, Rotterdam was reached on the 3rd August, the Feast of St Ignatius in that district, so they kept the feast in comparative peace. A week later they set sail for England on board the *John of Yarmouth*, and on the 13th landed at Harwich. Their exile was over, and they were on their own native shores once more, no longer in danger of their lives, for the first measures of Catholic emancipation had been passed in 1778 and 1791, but still far from having obtained any full measure of freedom and equality. It is, therefore, at this point that the history of the college overseas definitely ends, and the history of Stonyhurst College, which we shall take up in a later chapter, really has its beginning.

## CHAPTER V

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS UNDER THE PENAL LAWS

#### THE BENEDICTINE AND DOMINICAN SCHOOLS

To most of the religious Orders in England the action of Henry VIII in the great suppression and pillage of the monasteries and other religious houses was an absolute deathblow. They survived, indeed, but only by be-taking themselves to other houses of their Order on the Continent, and when they have returned to England they have not been able to claim any actual continuity with the past. But in the one case of the Benedictines, although only by the narrowest of limits, such continuity can be proved. The story is one of romantic interest, and deserves to be told once more.

Queen Mary had made an attempt to revive the Order by reconstituting the Abbey of Westminster in 1556. Dr Feckenham, the Dean of St Paul's, a former monk of Evesham and a student of Gloucester Hall at Oxford, was made Abbot. There were plenty of secularised Benedictines still alive and available, for it was only twenty-three years since the suppression, and sixteen others resumed the habit with him. For a short time the abbey returned to its former state, though much damage had been done, the great refectory and much else having been pulled down; but everything was brought to an end once more by the death of Queen Mary on 17th November 1588, and the accession of



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Queen Elizabeth. On 12th July the end came. The monks were turned out without pension to fend for themselves, and Abbot Feckenham was sent to the Tower. A year later he went as an unwelcome guest to Bishop Horne, now Bishop of Winchester.

It was not the Abbot, however, who was to have the honour of handing on the habit, and with it all the rights and privileges of the old Benedictine Order in England, but one of his monks, Dom Sigebert Buckley. He, no less than fifty years after this second suppression, being then old and blind and in prison at the Gate House at Westminster, and ninety-two years of age, received and admitted two younger men as brethren and monks of the old monastery of St Peter's of Westminster, and so secured the actual and direct succession. The present Benedictines of the English Congregation are, by virtue of this act, the canonical heirs of the former Congregation and of all its many privileges and great possessions in the country. This claim has been formally approved at Rome.

Before this act of aggregation to the old Congregation had taken place, many Englishmen, including the two who were thus affiliated, had entered monasteries on the Continent, especially in Spain and Italy, and efforts had been made to unite these together in monasteries in Flanders, from whence they could devote themselves to the needs of the English mission. Two such monasteries were founded about this time, one at Douay, where already Cardinal Allen's College of Seculars had been at work for some years, and the other at Dieuleward in Lorraine. As these two monasteries and their schools were the direct parents of the existing schools of Downside and Ampleforth, we must give a little attention to their history.

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## ST GREGORY'S, DOUAY

The founder of the monastery at Douay was Philip Caverel, Abbot of St Vedast in Arras, who had long wished to have a house of residence at the university of Douay where his young monks might be able to study. He now built, or at least began, a large conventual church and other buildings, and offered them to the newly collected English monks who had already placed themselves under the protection and name of St Gregory. In October 1611 they entered upon the new work and residence, under the command, as their first prior, of Dom Leander Jones.

There were at first no fixed and solid means of support available, but Abbot Caverel was soon able to make a settlement upon the new priory of 2000 florins a year from the Abbey of Arras.

By the year 1622—the actual date of the commencement is not clear—the monks of St Gregory's had started a school. The first clear mention of it comes from the informer, Lewis Owen, in 1626 :

“They have many other benefactors in that country, and withal they read a divinity lecture in their cloisters and have many scholars which are beneficial to them, and many gentlemen's sons, (which are their friends and benefactors in England,) do diet in the cloisters, but not in the same part where the monks live, but in the other side of the cloister; for they, and all other monks and friars, will not have any secular man to know their private knavery.”

The idea of such a school as this—a school for boys not intended for the ecclesiastical state and paying ‘pensions’ for their teaching and maintenance; living in the precincts of the monastery though not within the enclosure itself; but taught and looked after by monks—does not

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appear to have had any precedent among the English monasteries, though it is possible that there may have been such among the monasteries of the time of Charlemagne and during the early Middle Ages on the Continent. Accordingly, Fr Leander Jones, then President-General of the English Benedictines, writing as early as 1618 to Abbot Caverel, seems to have felt that its institution needed an apology. "Necessity," he writes, "compels us to have as boarders with us some English youths committed to our care, whom their parents confide to us solely for the purpose of being brought up in good manners and learning."

Of this necessity there could be no doubt. Allen had tried to supply the needs of Catholic parents in England by admitting lay boys into his seminary, but parents did not like the conjuncture, and the school was not well patronised. The Jesuits saw the need, and opened their school at St Omers with conspicuous success, but could not alone supply the wants of the Catholic boys of England. There was room enough, and to spare, for another school, and St Gregory's saw the opportunity and took it.

From the inventories we can form some idea of the numbers of these 'nobiles commensales,' as they are called in the Chapter Acts of the community in the year 1641. They seem for the first fifty years, up to 1670, not to have exceeded twenty. But in the later years of the century, the last years of Charles II and the reign of James II, the numbers increased and may have reached fifty. The numbers fell again with the Revolution of 1688, and then once more gradually increased to about the same maximum of fifty or sixty, which was never exceeded except in the last few years when, about 1780, after the opening of the new school buildings, it rose to eighty for a brief period.



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The best account of life at the school of old St Gregory's is to be found in the story of his school-days left by one Gilbert Langley, who came there from the Charterhouse in 1721. The annual pension or 'Salary,' as he calls it, was £25, and the boys dressed in "a Cassock and a Gown, resembling in form those on the foundation of the Charterhouse." All except the youngest were "obliged at all times, and upon all occasions, under a certain penalty, to speak the Latin tongue."

"We have a large Dormitory, where each student has his bed a-part, a Calefactory, and at each end thereof, a large fire-place, tho' but small allowances of wood, having but one faggot and two billets to each fire.

"Our Refectory or Dining Room is large and commodious. . . . Our Diet is bread and butter every morning, at noon half a pound of boiled meat with a porringer of broth, and, at night, the same allowance of roast with a salad, except on days of fast; but at meals we have as much bread and beer as we desire, altho' at all other times we are debarred even from a crust of bread or a draught of beer, which makes us frequently convey out same under our cassocks. . . . Over the students . . . a Prefect is appointed by the Prior . . . he hears all debates, settles all controversies, and appeases all animosities that arise among his pupils; his business is to call them up at five in the morning, as well in the winter as in the summer, he rings the bell to prayers, at their meals says grace, and orders one of the scholars in turn to mount the rostrum or pulpit and read the Martyrology, during the time of repast, whilst he himself stands at the upper end of the refectory to keep silence. . . . Hours of study are from five till half an hour after seven; the other half being allowed for washing and breakfast time: at eight we go to



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school, at eleven to prayers, at noon to dinner, at one to study, at two to school, at half an hour after four to play, at five to study, at six to supper, and afterwards to play if in summer time, or in the winter to our respective seats in the Calefactory. None dares presume to go into the town without the Prefect's leave. We have a capacious Area or Yard, wherein is a Terras Walk, and a place very suitable and proper for the exercise of Hand Ball, in which we, with great emulation, strove to surpass each other."

In this account the part which will, perhaps, most strike a modern schoolboy will be the long hours of study as compared with the short period allowed for recreation; ten hours of study to half an hour for play. Gilbert's memory must, one would think, have misled him here. There is no mention of daily Mass, or any prayers except from eleven to twelve. It looks as if they went daily to the conventual sung Mass. But this was at ten, not at eleven. Another, and perhaps a more probable interpretation, would be that there was early Mass, as at St Omers, somewhere between five and half-past seven, which Gilbert has not mentioned, and that the 'prayers' at eleven merely marked the end of the morning's work and ushered in an hour's recreation before dinner.

The appearance of the boys must have been very much like that of a modern Blue-Coat boy. They bunched up their cassocks when they played just as these do. They wore hats, however, and shoes with buckles.

Life at St Gregory's, in spite of the impression which Gilbert Langley gives, was not by any means 'all work and no play.' There were music and dancing to be learnt; pigeons and other pets to be kept; outings to the country-house at Esquerchin, which answered to the 'Blandyke' of the Jesuits; 'bat and ball' and even

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cricket to be played in summer, and football in winter, but we have no record as to special rules. At Christmas, too, when of course all the boys remained at school, for holidays were impossible, there was the 'Court of St Gregory.' This custom was brought over to England and survived at Downside to well within living memory, when it was at last brought to an end by the boys going home for the Christmas holidays. Gilbert Langley gives a long account of it, as it used to be carried out about 1725, which may be read in full in Dom Norbert Birt's *History of Downside School*. One of the boys was elected King, and was usually, though not necessarily, the head of the school. Another was chosen to be Lord High Constable, another to be Lord President, another Lord Chamberlain. There were several other offices, including Ambassadors, Secretary of State, and so forth, modelled upon the Court of the time of Queen Elizabeth, and including even one who was chosen as Court Fool, which was reckoned a very honourable office. A room was set apart as 'the Palace.' At Douay this was the boys' refectory; at Downside in after years there was a special room which still bears the name, and here the King kept his Court. Here, during the period of his reign, no master entered unless by invitation. A strong feeling of honour prevented any harm resulting from this freedom from control, and discipline was probably kept just as well for the time by the 'king' and his officers as by the Prefect and masters. There was a great feast on one day at which the 'king' presided, both he and his officers in full robes, and the Prior, and sometimes, in later years, the Bishop, sat as his guests by his side. Songs and games and speeches followed, and the festivities did not end till midnight. Epiphany, 'Twelfth Night,' brought the 'king's' reign to an end, and life resumed its ordinary lines.

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## THE LAST DAYS OF OLD ST GREGORY'S

By 1775 the original buildings, which had been put up a hundred and fifty years before by Abbot Caverel, were beginning to decay, and were no longer sufficient for the needs of a school of boys of the class that came to St Gregory's. It was determined, therefore, to rebuild, and an appeal was made to the friends of the house, which was liberally responded to. The monks of St Vaast, who were still the legal owners of the property, gave them permission, and added a contribution worth in our money some £5000. New buildings were erected, part of which still stands, at a total cost of about £40,000. Some further account of them will be given later in connection with the story of the monks of St Edmund's, Douay, for they occupied them for many years more than did the fathers of St Gregory's, who originally put them up.

The new buildings were finished by 1781. In that year a resolution was taken by the English Benedictine Congregation which was fatal for the time being to the prosperity of the school of St Gregory's. It was that the newly built house, while continuing as a school for lay boys, should also serve as the general novitiate for the Congregation, and that all the boys who were being educated at any of the houses of the Congregation for the Order, should be transferred to St Gregory's and educated there. The effect was immediate, though quite unexpected and unintended. Parents in England, just as they had done a hundred and fifty years earlier in connection with the secular school at Douay, took fright at what they thought would make St Gregory's too ecclesiastical an establishment. The supply of boys from England and Ireland practically dried up. As a lay school for the sons of good families



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St Gregory's almost ceased to exist. To such an extent was this the case that, to keep it alive at all, it was necessary for the first time in its existence to admit foreign boys. Whereas for a hundred and fifty years before 1781 there are only six French names to be found on the school lists, within four years, in 1785, the school had become two-thirds French. When the great catastrophe came in 1793, and the progress of the French Revolution made it necessary for St Gregory's, as for the other English establishments, to leave its home and migrate to England, there were few English boys left. Only nine are mentioned in the letter giving the names of all the inmates of the house which was written to the president by the prior on 27th February 1793, but very possibly some had returned to England, to avoid the coming troubles, before that date. When the position had become obviously untenable, the boys and some of the community seem to have left in small parties, and found their way home as best they could. Of the way in which this was accomplished we have no record except in the story of Ralph Radcliffe, of Stearsby in Yorkshire, which was published in the *Ampleforth Journal* of July 1900. But all seem to have got home somehow, and, as we shall see in the story of the secular college of Douay,<sup>1</sup> the remnant which formed part of the *trente deux* at Doullens were only six, viz. the prior and subprior; Simeon Lord, Esq., whose exact position is rather vague, but who seems to have been a kind of oblate; two choir brothers and one lay brother. Since no boys were with them, their sufferings at Doullens, which they shared with the larger and more varied body from the secular college, need not be told again here. The history of St Gregory's, Douay, was over, though the buildings came

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, p. 110.

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back later into Benedictine hands, and the rest of the story belongs to the history of St Gregory's, Downside.

### ST LAWRENCE'S, DIEULEWARD

When, in the year 1607, in the prison at the Gate House of Westminster, old Dom Sigebert Buckley aggregated the two young monks, Edward Mayhew and Robert Sadler, to the ancient English Congregation of Benedictines, and thereby handed on to them all the rights and privileges of his own Abbey of Westminster and of the Congregation of which he was then the only surviving member, these monks had at first no monastery. In 1606 the collegiate church and house at Dieuleward had been handed over to the English Benedictines by the Chapter of Nancy, and it was to that house that at a later date they betook themselves. It is on that fact that the community of St Lawrence base their claims to be especially the heirs of the Abbey of Westminster, and now bear its arms by the authority of the College of Heralds.

St Lawrence's, Dieuleward, originally Benedictine, had more lately been a house of secular canons, but it had long been unoccupied, and so the gift was not much more than the skeleton of a church and the ruins of a monastery. For four years the church had been used as a stable. It was built of small stones, roughly squared, and was about one hundred and thirty feet long, with round-headed windows, and very little architectural ornament. Six steep steps led up to the altar, and in the centre of these steps was a window-opening looking into the crypt. It was a very ancient church, having originally been built by Heimon, Bishop of Verdun, somewhere about the year 1000.

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The other conventual buildings were entirely decayed, and had to be built up again almost from the ground. Even in 1701 a letter speaks of them as being still in rather a ruinous state. When the first monks arrived in 1608 to take possession, under the leadership of Dom William Gifford, who had been Rector of the university of Rheims and Chancellor of the diocese, they had among them the sum of three hundred francs, no more, with which to feed and clothe themselves and to build a monastery in what was to them a foreign land. Dr Gifford, however, it appears, had some money of his own, for he had only just, at the age of fifty, become a monk, and this was used for putting the house in order.

For some years the existence of the new priory was from hand to mouth. There was trouble almost at the beginning with the Spanish Benedictines, with whom most of the earliest fathers had been professed. They wanted to continue their own authority, and were unwilling to accept the new English Congregation as being in any real sense the continuation of the old. This dispute was soon settled in favour of the English. But, such was their poverty, that Dr Gifford and Fr Barnes were obliged to leave, and betook themselves to St Malo, where another struggling house was being founded. It was very hard at this period for the English Benedictines to get a secure footing anywhere. But Gifford was too great a man to remain long in obscurity, and he was well known in Rheims, where he had been Chancellor of the diocese. He was now recalled to Rheims and made Bishop Auxiliary. When the Archbishop died three years later, Dr Gifford was appointed by Louis XIII to succeed him, and so became Archbishop of Rheims, Primate of France, and Legatus Natus of the Holy See, a very remarkable position for



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an English monk and old member of Lincoln College at Oxford to have reached.

It was not until 1669 that any idea of a college for boys at Dieuleward took shape. There was an attempt about that time to divide the work of education between the three Benedictine houses on the Continent. St Gregory's, Douay, was to undertake the education of all aspirants to the Congregation at their already existing school; St Lawrence's, Dieuleward, was to be the common novitiate of the three houses; and St Edmund's, Paris, was left as a monastery of regular observance without either boys or novices. But this scheme was never carried out to any great extent in practice.

In 1686 there were four boys as paying students at Dieuleward, and after that date there seem always to have been just a few; hardly ever more than three or four, not enough to make a school in any real sense. When once the step had been taken and it had been determined to take boys, the idea was never wholly given up, and in spite of all discouragement the little school continued.

In 1717 came a great disaster. The entire monastery was burnt to the ground. A few years earlier this would have meant the end of St Lawrence's, but the position was stronger now, and money was generously subscribed by the French of Lorraine and a number of English benefactors. Four years after the fire they were once more in full occupation of the monastery, with fresh students in the school, and with accommodation for them very much improved.

In consequence of this improved accommodation the eighteenth century was for St Lawrence's a period of continuous progress, though not of rapid increase. The old scheme of dividing the duties of education between the houses came up again in 1725, once more without

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result, and a third time in 1761; but now as part of a general measure of reform of all monasteries initiated by the King of France. This time the plan was reversed. St Gregory's was to keep its lay boys, and to conduct the novitiate, while St Lawrence's was to receive the boys who were being educated with the view of entering the Order. The scheme was given a trial, but was not really practicable, although it read so well on paper. No monastic house is ever really satisfied to have its novices trained outside of its own walls, and schemes for a common novitiate almost always break down for this reason.

At this period, after the rebuilding, St Lawrence's resembled nothing so much as a small Oxford college. It consisted of a single quadrangle, one side of which was wholly occupied by the church, which could also be entered direct from the street. There were outbuildings to the rear, and a cloister round three sides.

We have very little information about the school life at Dieuleward. The school was always small and unimportant, and in consequence has not left many records behind. Just because it was so small it was very probably in advance of many other schools of the time. It would hardly be worth while to keep two tables, and the boys probably shared in the life of the monks to a greater extent than usual, even among Benedictine schools, where the family note is always prominent.

With 1790 there came a time of great difficulty for the monks of St Lawrence's, as for all the other English Catholic institutions in France. There came an order to them to close their church to the public, and not to ring their bells. It was clear that this was only a beginning, and that the position was hopeless. They began to prepare for flight by selling as much as they

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could of the monastic property. The sale of some horses became known, and their doings were watched closely, lest they should make away with 'national property.' The Prior asked for passports for the Community, but these were refused at first, though afterwards granted for the students. Then they resolved to go away secretly. There was no great difficulty in this. The town authorities were eager to see them go, that they might seize the property for themselves. All got away except the Prior and two other priests, three lay brothers, and four French oblates. These, it was thought, ran no great risk by staying, except only the Prior, who had made away with much of the property and was undoubtedly in danger of the guillotine if he were arrested.

At last, on the 9th October 1793, there came an order for the arrest of all British subjects. The Prior heard the proclamation as he was preparing for bed, and made his escape at once. His adventures have been published in the *Ampleforth Journal* (vol. vi. p. 179). He crossed the Moselle at midnight by wading and swimming, and hid himself in a friendly house. Eventually he was able to cross the frontier.

The rest of the Community were taken off to prison, but were not ill-treated. The French lay oblates were released at once on taking an oath of fidelity to the Republic. After a short interval the others were deported from the country, and at Tréves joined their companions who had preceded them in this journey. St Lawrence's had come to a final end, and was never again to be recovered. It was turned into a Temple of Reason, and adopted as the meeting-house of a club. A Feast of Agriculture was held in the church, when a bull, adorned with ribbons, was the centre of a pagan service of hymns and canticles. After a time the order



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came for the buildings to be emptied and the contents sold. But the people of Dieuleward, who had always been friendly to the monks, refused to do this, and strangers were brought in for the work. The villagers secreted the much-venerated image of Notre Dame des Grottes, and preserved it from destruction. A part of the building still stands, but is no longer put to any religious uses. For the later history of the Community we must go to Ampleforth College.

### THE DOMINICAN SCHOOL AT BORNHEM

Among the few Catholics in England who were able to play any prominent part in the history of the country during the seventeenth century, there was none more interesting than Philip Howard, better known as Cardinal Howard, of the house of the Dukes of Norfolk on his father's side, while his mother was a daughter of Esmé Stuart, Duke of Lennox, and therefore a blood relation of the reigning sovereign. His grandfather, the Earl of Arundel, with whom he lived, was living for the moment at Antwerp, and so Philip had the chance, which he would have been denied in England, of seeing the Catholic Church in full vitality. Hence it was that at the early age of fifteen, in spite of the most determined and prolonged opposition on the part of his grandfather and all his family, he decided to enter religion and take the habit of St Dominic. In that determination he remained firm, and after profession rose rapidly in the Order. He was filled with the desire that the Dominicans should once more take their part in the work of the re-conversion of England, and, since religious life in England itself was impossible, turned his eyes to Flanders, where the convent of Bornhem, at that time deserted, was available for his purpose.

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Having got himself appointed as the first Prior, and having obtained the help of some others whom he caused to be trained in the novitiate at Brussels, the convent was at length opened in 1657. After the lapse of one hundred years from the destruction of the monasteries in England, there was, through the energy of this one man, once more a house of English Dominicans. From that one convent and its original six brethren have come all the English Dominicans of the present time.

The provision for the education of English Catholic boys was still far from adequate. Cardinal Allen's school at Douay could take about fifty. The Jesuits at St Omers were educating perhaps one hundred. The Benedictines of St Gregory's at Douay had about twenty. There were other seminaries in Rome, Spain, and Lisbon, but these three were the only three schools to which boys could go who did not aim at the priesthood. Father Howard determined to found a fourth school in connection with his convent, and this was accordingly done. The school was started, with only a few boys certainly, but with every hope of obtaining more, drawn by Father Howard's position and personality, before any long time had passed.

Unfortunately, however, at this juncture Father Howard was recalled to England, to take up the position of Almoner to Queen Catherine of Braganza, and his duties kept him always at the English Court. The rule at Bornhem fell into the hands of the subprior, Father Vincent Torre, and he, in his zeal for strict observance of the rule, determined to close the school, which had only been opened for two or three years. It was closed in 1666.

In 1670 Father Torre's rule came to an end, and the school, which had always had the approval of the rest

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of the Community, was at once reopened, but, once more, only to remain open for two years. A third attempt was made in 1673, and this time with success. A certain number of Flemish boys were received and made a nucleus, and when the school was thus finally established English boys in good numbers soon began to arrive.

No day scholars were received at the college. The costume of the students was a cassock, black girdle, long stockings, buckled stock and bands, shoes with buckles, and a suitable hat. The pension, at first only £16, was almost at once raised to £20. Everyone was to bring with him "a silver spoon and fork, which they must leave behind, though they go away immediately after putting on the cassock." The supreme authority was vested in the Prior, and he appointed one of the Fathers as prefect to be immediately over the boys.

In 1773, when the Society of Jesus was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV, their colleges at Bruges were seized by the authorities, and when the boys proved rebellious and refused to obey any masters except the Jesuits to whom their parents had entrusted them, the Dominican Fathers of Bornhem were called upon in the name of the Empress Maria Theresa to take charge and reduce the boys to order. It was a thankless task, and the boys took the matter into their own hands by withdrawing, pleading the commands of their parents, and both the upper and the lower college were soon almost empty, so the Dominicans were allowed to retire.

The college at Bornhem was at this time very flourishing. It had been almost completely rebuilt, and had one hundred and twenty pupils, so that after the Jesuit school at Liege it was the largest of the English schools on the Continent. But here, again, everything was brought to an end by the French Revolution. The



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college accounts for the period are unfortunately lost, so it is not possible to know much about the progress of events. But in 1794 Bornhem, like all the other English establishments on the Continent, had to be closed. The French troops surrounded the place, and the French general, mistaking the college for the château of the Baron de Bornhem, ordered it to be set on fire. Being apprised of his mistake, he rescinded his order ; but it was too late, and a great deal of damage had already been done.

In 1797, matters having quieted down a little, the Fathers were able, acting secretly, and with the money that had been given them as compensation, to buy back their own convent from the Government. A small Community was got together, and the college was reopened, but mainly with Flemish boys. As far as English boys were concerned, it had altogether ceased to exist. But, even to-day, a school is still carried on by the Bernardine Fathers in the old buildings, which provides for as many as five hundred day boys.

### CARSHALTON SCHOOL

Those of the Community and boys who had reached England at the destruction of the Bornhem College in 1793 at once set about making a similar foundation in their own country. They obtained a large house at Carshalton in Surrey, which they took on a lease of forty years, at a rent of £40 per annum. They got together a good many of their old scholars, and the school was in going order by 1797, under Father Benedict Atkinson, who had been head of the Bornhem College. The following advertisement appeared in the *Catholic Directory* for 1797:—

“BORNHEM HOUSE ACADEMY, at CARSHALTON near

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CROYDON, SURREY. By the Rev. Mr ATKINSON, from the ENGLISH COLLEGE at BORNHEM in FLANDERS.—Young gentlemen are admitted from 8 to 14 years of age.—Instructions. A daily lecture on the principles of religion with an exhortation to virtue. The history and morality of the old and new testament. Writing, arithmetic, algebra, book-keeping and the mathematics (to which branches particular attention will be paid). The English and French languages grammatically. Elocution, geography, the use of the globes and history. Latin and Greek if required. At the end of each month there will be an examination and precedence assigned according to merit: before the Midsummer vacation a public one: in which the improvements of the year will be exhibited, with a distribution of honorary premiums.—During the hours of recreation a master will constantly attend, whose sole employment will be to prevent irregularities and promote harmony and good breeding. Terms, THIRTY POUNDS per annum to be paid half yearly per advance, for board lodging and washing. Clothes, books, physicians, medicines, postage, pocket money, music, drawing, and dancing will be considered as extra charges.—No entrance money is required; nor any extraordinary charge for such as may pass the vacations at school, and it is earnestly wished that all the young gentlemen may be allowed to do so. Due attention will be paid to cleanliness and whatever may be conducive to health. Vacations are from the 24th of June till the end of July, and from the 21st of December till the 7th of January.”

Financial difficulties before long showed themselves. The resources of the province were very small, and the school at Carshalton did not prove to be self-supporting. By 1811 the total losses amounted to £7000, and there was still an adverse balance. It was therefore deter-

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mined to close the college, though there were still more than fifty boys in the school. At Acton Burnell at that date the Benedictine Fathers had only fifteen, and there were no more at Ampleforth. So, as far as numbers go, the school at Carshalton must have been at the time of its closing the second largest Catholic school in England, with only Stonyhurst surpassing it in numbers. It looks as if the management had not been good, for a Mr Mylius took on the buildings and carried on a large and flourishing school there for many years, under the old title of 'Bornhem House Academy.'

After the closing of Carshalton, Father Woods, who had been headmaster, was transferred to Hinckley, and there for many years a struggling little school was carried on, in which many boys of good family were educated. That, too, succumbed about the middle of the century, owing to the opening of the new house at Woodchester, which made it impossible to supply enough fathers to keep it going. Then for many years the Dominicans were without a school in England, until in 1884 a fresh attempt was made at Hinckley, which was soon transferred to Hawkesyard, in Staffordshire, where the liberality of the Spode family had given them a large house and park. At Hawkesyard the school remained until 1924. For various reasons it was not possible for it to attain any large proportions as long as it remained there, so it was at length decided to remove once more. A more commodious house was bought at Laxley Hall, in Northamptonshire, only a few miles from Stamford, which had formerly been the property of the Barons Carbery. The mansion, which dates from the last decade of the eighteenth century, is a large stone building capable of accommodating at least seventy boys, with the means also of unlimited enlargement. In addition to the mansion, about



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ninety acres of gardens, playing-fields, and woods have been purchased, and Laxley Hall, now only in its beginning, may well develop into a large and flourishing school. In memory of the original foundation at Bornhem, it is called 'Cardinal Howard's School.'

## CHAPTER VI

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS UNDER THE PENAL LAWS

#### SECULAR SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

UP to the time of James II there was no possibility of a Catholic school on English soil. The various colleges on the Continent were the only sources of Catholic education. Under James II a few little schools were opened in various parts of England, but most of them perished with the Revolution in 1688. Perhaps the most interesting of these experiments, although, unfortunately, we know very little of its inner history, was the comparatively large day-school which was carried on by the Jesuits in the Savoy Palace. It came to an end, of course, with the flight of James and the Revolution.

Among the schools which survived this catastrophe the most important was, perhaps, the school at Twyford, near Winchester. It was originally established at Silksteed, about two miles away, but was soon moved to Twyford. Its principal claim to fame is that it numbered Alexander Pope among its pupils. He went there at eight years of age, and always spoke well of the teaching he had received there, although his stay came to an end through an unmerciful thrashing he received from one of the masters whom he had lampooned. In 1726 the headmaster of the school was Mr Fleetwood, a secular priest who had been educated at Valladolid. Under him the school was very pro-

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sperous, and had more than a hundred boarders. Among the masters a little later was Mr Needham, who had the honour of being the first Catholic priest to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He taught at Twyford for three years, and later attained a great scientific reputation in biology.

Those, however, were still very difficult times for Catholic schools, and in the troubles which followed the Jacobite rising of 1745 the school had to be closed. It was reopened again in 1753 in a new situation, at Standon Lordship, in Hertfordshire, a choice which has had very considerable results in the story of Catholic education.

### STANDON LORDSHIP

The house at Standon Lordship had for some time been the property of the Catholic family of Aston, and Mass had been long said in its chapel. But when the fifth Lord Aston died in 1751, leaving only two infant daughters, the house was offered on lease, and Bishop Challoner took it with a view to replacing Twyford and providing a school for Catholics in Southern England. The penal laws were still in full force, and the matter was one of some difficulty and danger, but the house at Standon Lordship was very secluded and might easily escape attention. It was a large house, built on a quadrangular plan, and provided accommodation for a good many boys. The first master was a Mr Richard Kendal, a priest who had been educated at Douay, and who probably therefore brought a good many of the Douay customs into use.

We have a tolerably clear idea of the life at Standon Lordship in the latter half of the eighteenth century from a document which has come down to us, preserved among the archives at St Edmund's College,



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which is entitled, "The Rules and Customs of Standon School." The 'children' rose at 6, and after 'washing and combing' in the lavatory (a ceremony which was performed by the housekeeper and housemaids every morning, while the boys learnt their catechism in silence), went to Mass at 6.30. Breakfast was at 7.15, and study from 8 to 12, with a quarter of an hour's break at 10. Dinner was at 12, and study again at 2. At 4 o'clock in summer, just as at Winchester and Eton, there was 'small beer.' At Eton College this custom, known as 'bever,' went on in college till a few years ago. Evening prayers were at 6, supper at 6.30, and bed at 8, except that in summer there was again 'small beer' at 8 and bedtime was 8.30.

The diet of the children consisted of boiled milk and milk pottage for breakfast; meat, bread, and beer for dinner; and bread and butter or cheese, with milk, for supper.

No games are mentioned, except that on Sundays the playing of ninepins and the drawing about of 'ye cart,' as also whistling and singing, are all forbidden for fear of scandal. Great care was taken of the boys' health. They were not to lie about on the grass in any month with an R in its name; never to be out without a hat, or to snowball in winter weather, and whenever it was cold enough to have fires they were to wear their overcoats whenever they went out. Offences against these rules were paid for by a fine of one halfpenny to be given to the poor, and in extreme cases by 'ye rod.'

The house was only held on lease, and in 1767, after they had been there fourteen years, it was sold over their head, and another move was necessary. For a short time the school found refuge at Hare Street, in a house belonging to a Mr Brand, a Catholic. By an odd coincidence this house came again into Catholic

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hands, having been bought by Mgr Hugh Benson, who resided there for the last few years of his life. He left it to the Archbishop of Westminster, and it is now the country-house of Cardinal Bourne. It must have been far too small for the needs of the school. They were there only two years, and then, as the school was threatened with extinction, Bishop Talbot, at that time Vicar Apostolic of the London District, came to the rescue, and bought the estate of Old Hall. This had to be done by an artifice, for under the penal laws no Catholics could validly purchase land. Still, past experience had shown that something more permanent than a leasehold tenure was advisable. The property was bought in 1772.

### OLD HALL GREEN ACADEMY

With the establishment of the school at Old Hall we pass really into the commencement of the history of St Edmund's College. For from 1772 their history has been continuous, and the direct connection of the school, at first with the Vicars Apostolic and later with the Archbishops of Westminster, has been maintained. But since the change in its status was so great in the year 1794, when the Douay College was transferred, it will be best to treat of the previous history of the academy here, and to begin our story of St Edmund's College at the later date.

The buildings of the Old Hall still remain at the back of the present college. The middle part was the house bought by Bishop Talbot, the two wings are his addition. They formed the study-place and the kitchen respectively, with dormitories over. The chapel was in the loft over the south dormitory, and still remains more or less in its original condition. It does not show

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on the outside, for reasons of precaution, for the penal laws were still in force.

The first master was the Rev. James Willacy, a relation of Mr Kendal, with whom he had been working for some years. At first there were only about twelve or fifteen boys, though the numbers afterwards rose to about forty. The fees were about £25 a year.

In 1778 came the first measures of repeal of the penal laws, which did away with the loathsome power of 'the informer,' and required that the Government itself should initiate any prosecution. By this Act the position of the academy was much improved, and in 1791 Catholic churches were at last recognised by the law and put out of danger. The 'Old Hall' was duly registered under the new Act as a place of Catholic worship on 9th January 1793.

The following advertisement of the academy appeared in the *Catholic Directory* for 1793 :—

### "OLD HALL GREEN ACADEMY PUCKERIDGE. HERTS

"1. For a yearly pension of twenty five guineas young gentlemen will be furnished with board, lodging, and washing, and taught reading, writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, and the use of the globes, English, Latin, Greek and French, which last they will be obliged to speak in their familiar conversation on certain days. A strict attention will be given to cleanliness, civility, and, above all, to their morality and religion.

"2. The young gentlemen will contend for precedence several times in the year, and before the vacation, which begins on the 24th of June and continues to



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the end of July, when all are expected to be at home or to pay according to the time. The most advanced will give public exhibitions of their improvement, and all undergo a public examination, when the first in each class will be rewarded with a suitable premium.

“3. At dinner, two good dishes besides vegetables. Breakfast, milk, milk pottage, or tea and bread and butter if parents desire it. Supper: milk, bread and butter and cheese, or sometimes tarts, besides a piece of bread at eleven o'clock and four o'clock. None admitted after the age of twelve, but may continue after that age as long as parents choose.

“*N.B.* The situation is one of the most pleasant and healthy in all England.”

Mr Willacy had retired in 1792, and his place as headmaster was taken by Mr Potier, another Douay priest, who had been on the Mission in London for three years before coming in 1785 to be Mr Willacy's assistant. Bishop Talbot had died in 1790, and by his will the property passed to the ownership of the Vicars Apostolic of the London District. He was succeeded by Bishop Douglass, and the school was therefore already ecclesiastical property, and under the control of Bishop Douglass as Vicar Apostolic, when the memorable event of 1794 took place. From that time on the history is no longer that of 'Old Hall Green Academy,' but of 'St Edmund's College, Old Hall Green.'

### SEDGLEY PARK

The school at Sedgley Park, which was the most important Catholic school in the Midlands, and in some ways the most important in all England in the latter part of the eighteenth century, owed its origin to the

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saintly Bishop Challoner. There had been several previous attempts made by him to get such a school, but all of them had failed, and it was not until 1762 that he was at length able to put it on a permanent basis by the leasing of the Park Hall at Sedgley, near Wolverhampton, from the sixth Lord Ward, whose property it was.

The first President of the new school was Mr Hugh Kendal, brother of Mr Richard Kendal of whom we have already spoken in connection with Standon Lordship. He came at the Bishop's request to start the new school, and found as its nucleus some dozen boys who had come from the defunct school at Betley, which was one of the previous attempts of which we have already spoken. Here again, since Mr Kendal was a Douay man, Douay must be looked to as the probable source of many of the school customs.

Sedgley Park was a tall, square mansion, approached from Wolverhampton by a long and very noble avenue of elms. It was three stories high, with an exceptional number of windows. The offices were wholly detached from the main building, known as the High House, and were situated on each side. In later years these two wings were joined up by means of other buildings to the centre and made one continuous edifice. The various rooms of the house were appropriated to school use, the Big Parlour being used as the study-place. The refectory and playroom were in the new building to the west of the main house, and the chapel was over the refectory. The top story was made into two dormitories, which ran the whole length of the building, and had cubicles for masters in the corners. Artistic effect was not thought of, any more than in the other Catholic colleges of the period, and Sedgley Park as altered by Mr Kendal was probably the ugliest

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of all, although the old central portion was by no means without distinction.

Pupils began to arrive almost at once. John Milner, afterwards to fill so big a place in the Catholic history of the time, arrived in 1765. The boys were principally of the mercantile class, and the school was by no means so aristocratic as that at Old Hall Green. The pension accordingly was much less, and at first was only twelve guineas a year. Few boys stayed longer than three or four years. Everything was done with the most rigid economy. The boys, for instance, all through Mr Kendal's time and up to a much later period, washed in the open air at the pump, in a long trough lined with lead, while the horses were watered from the same pump, and all along the wall of the open washhouse stood the pails for receiving the hog-wash. Still, boys came and were not dissatisfied. Indeed, the school was beyond all others conservative. Even far on into the nineteenth century nothing was changed, so that one can get a really vivid idea of school life in the eighteenth century by examining the customs of Sedgley Park about 1830, as described by Dr Husenbeth in his *History of Sedgley Park*. Certainly few boys, even of the lowest class, would put up nowadays with such a régime.

Breakfast was after Mass, of bread and milk porridge, or onion porridge occasionally when milk was short. Dinner was at a quarter past twelve, and supper at six o'clock, which last was of bread with milk, cold in summer but hot in winter. The boys drank out of tin cans and had pewter plates with iron spoons. For dinner there was always meat, with rice pudding instead on Fridays. Such extra delicacies as could be bought were known by the Eton name of 'sock.'

The dress was found by the school, and included in



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the modest pension. It was generally of corduroy, with only one pocket in the knee-breeches and one in the coat on opposite sides, so that in cold weather boys walked about with one hand in the breeches pocket and the other in the coat. The hat was of leather and edged with fur, and worn like a cocked hat crossways across the head.

The advertisement in the *Catholic Directory* for the year 1797 runs as follows:—

“SEDGLEY PARK ACADEMY, near WOLVERHAMPTON STAFFORDSHIRE. The Rev. Mr KIRK, President. The children to bring with them two suits of clothes, six shirts, four pair of stockings, three pair of shoes, two hats, four pocket handkerchiefs, a knife, fork, spoon and two combs. Each of these articles if not new must be serviceable, otherwise the deficiency, whether in number or quality, will be charged to account. . . . The annual pension is SEVENTEEN GUINEAS. . . . If they learn Latin another half guinea must be paid at entrance. For this pension everything necessary, even medicines, will be allowed, except in any long illness and when the assistance of a physician may be requisite; also a penny a week for pocket money. Each boy will have a bed to himself and clean linen twice a week. . . . None are to be allowed any money but at the discretion of the chief master: and their friends are humbly requested not to offer to convey them any without his knowledge. No allowance will be made for absence in the vacation time and it is most earnestly wished that parents would not often call them home at those times. The age for education at this school is from about six to fourteen. Should any parents wish to supply their children with clothes they shall be admitted at FOURTEEN GUINEAS a year for common board and schooling. All extra expenses must be charged to them as to the parlour-boarders. Parlour-boarders are to pay TWENTY

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FIVE POUNDS a year for board and schooling. They must find themselves in clothes, books, and all extra articles. In other respects they must conform to the regulations for common boarders."

But if life at Sedgley Park was hard, the training was very successful, and few schools retained so great a hold on the affections of their pupils. The Park was, as Bishop Milner used to say, "the nursery of the English priesthood." Yet it was never a seminary in any sense, only a middle-class school, but one that produced sentiments of religion among the boys which lasted on into later life. Bishop Milner was by no means the only one who attained eminence. The well-known antiquary, Dr Oliver, was at the school, and so was Dr Husenbeth. In another walk of life may be mentioned the two Kembles.

The importance of Sedgley Park as a school came largely to an end in 1808, when the college at Oscott was handed over to Bishop Milner by the gentlemen who owned it. At that time there were about one hundred and fifty boys in the school. Sedgley continued as a school for boys preparing for the priesthood for a long time after that period, but its importance was past, and was taken by Oscott in its turn. It continued to do excellent work, but its accommodation had never been adequate, and grew worse and worse as the years went on. The conditions of life there were, it must be acknowledged, very rough, and at last quite unsuitable. Then, in 1873, Bishop Ullathorne decided that there was no advantage in paying the large sums that would be needed to put the place in proper order, and that it would be best to move the whole school. He purchased for the new school Cotton Hall in Staffordshire, with about four hundred acres of land.

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## COTTON HALL

Cotton Hall was a place which was already possessed of many Catholic memories. It was here that on the invitation of John, "the good Lord Shrewsbury," Father Faber settled with the companions who had followed him, and lived as the community of the Brothers of the Will of God. When Faber made up his mind to be an Oratorian, and went to London for the foundation of the Brompton Oratory, the place was bought by the Bishop, and the school was transferred. The situation is a most beautiful one, and very suitable for a school. The college flourishes still as a middle-class school, and is composed, like so many other Catholic schools, both of lay boys and of boys studying for the priesthood and destined in time to go on to Oscott. It is known as St Wilfred's College, and claims, as the successor of Sedgley Park and the inheritor of all its rights, to be the first established of all existing English Catholic schools. It calls itself the oldest English Catholic college. To that title it hardly seems to have a right, since it can only claim it as successor to Sedgley Park, and on the same grounds St Edmund's, Ware, can claim to be the successor of Allen's school at Douay. Nor was Sedgley Park established before St Edmund's first predecessor at Standon Lordship, so it seems difficult to admit the claim.

## OTHER SMALLER SCHOOLS

Besides these, there were existing in England in the eighteenth century various other small schools, leading for the most part rather a chequered life. About these it is very hard to find any trustworthy information. There was a well-known dame's school at Fernyhalgh



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in Lancashire—‘Dame Alice’s’—where a number of well-known eighteenth-century Catholics received their earliest education; among others the Kendals, afterwards headmasters of Sedgley Park and Standon Lordship respectively. A third brother, Dr George Kendal, was actually himself headmaster of ‘Dame Alice’s’ from 1744 to 1754. The school was also known as ‘Ladywell.’ Yet another member of this family was Fr Richard Peter Kendal, O.S.B., whom we shall meet with in connection with the history of Downside.

At Edgbaston, too, about the middle of the eighteenth century, a small school was carried on, rather intermittently, by the Franciscan Fathers who had the mission. But neither this nor any other succeeded in so establishing itself as to develop into a permanent school. Such other attempts as were made seem rather to have been of the nature of a tutor taking private pupils than of an actual and well-established school.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SECULAR TRADITION

#### ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE

THE secular colleges of Douay and St Omers were confiscated, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> by the revolutionists in 1793; St Omers in August, Douay in October. It was a time of war with England, and the actual confiscation was only the culmination of a long series of attacks upon the colleges. Perhaps it would have been better if they had given in at an earlier date. But to Mr Daniel, who was then President of Douay, and to others, it seemed imperative, for the sake of Catholicism in England, to hold on to the last possible moment.

Meanwhile, however, in the earlier part of 1793, the aspect of affairs already appeared so dangerous that it was determined to bury some of the more valuable possessions of the college. Some of the plate especially was buried outside the walls, and some more, as well as the more important relics, including the hair-shirt of St Thomas and the red biretta of St Charles Borromeo, were similarly disposed of inside. The plate buried outside was dug up again eighteen months later, and sold to defray certain expenses; but the part which was buried within the college remained there for seventy years, and was for the most part eventually recovered by Mgr Searle in 1863, excavations having been carried out in accordance with the memoranda made at the

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, pp. 61, 63.

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time. The plate thus recovered was divided between Old Hall and Ushaw.

When the actual confiscation took place in October, all the inmates of the college were arrested. A great many had gone long before to England, recalled by their parents. The school of one hundred and forty had dwindled down to about forty. They were sent at first to the Scots College at Douay, where they were joined by six English Benedictine monks from St Gregory's, Douay, and a few days later ordered to go as prisoners to Doullens in Picardy. A few more succeeded in escaping on the road, among them Mr Coombes, a priest who was afterwards well known in England, and who wrote an account of his adventures, and the number that arrived at Doullens was only thirty-two, including the six Benedictines.

Life at Doullens was hard enough, but the boys kept up their spirits, playing English games and singing English songs. There was no actual ill-treatment.

The foresight of the Benedictines had led them to secrete, before they left their country-house at Esquerchin and just before the arrival of the gendarmes who were to take them to Doullens, all the requisites for saying Mass, including an altar-stone, a chalice and paten, and a set of green vestments, besides the necessary linen, candles, and altar-breads. By the help of baskets, boxes, and shutters they contrived to raise a structure whereon to place their altar-stone in a small room adjoining their prison chamber, hanging up blankets to cover the window. "For fear of arousing suspicion they rose very quietly and knelt on the straw so as to avoid making any noise; and thus on All Saints' Day, mass was said for the first time by Prior Sharrock, and next day again mass was offered up for the Holy Souls, and once again before Christmas were



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they accorded the boon assisting at the holy sacrifice. In the sacristy at Downside there is still preserved a neat little chalice, with an inscription on the base recording that the secular and regular priests, confined at Doullens, had used it for the celebration of the holy sacrifice during the days of their imprisonment.”<sup>1</sup>

In May 1794 there arrived at Doullens Dr Gregory Stapleton and fifty-two others, boys and priests from St Omers. They had gone through a worse time even than the Douay boys, having been sent to Arras, where feeling ran high, and had more than once been in imminent danger of being guillotined. Two months later, in July, Robespierre fell, and things were at once better. The boys were allowed to go back to their old schools at Douay and St Omers, pledging their word that they would not try to escape.

Meanwhile things had not stood still in England. Most people realised that it would never be possible to reconstitute the lost colleges on the Continent. Moreover, the more clear-sighted realised also that, now that the laws forbidding Catholic schools on English soil had been practically repealed, it was very doubtful whether it would be wise to do so. Catholics had been exiles for two hundred years and more under compulsion, there was no reason now why they should continue to be so of their own free will.

Dr Douglass, who was now Vicar Apostolic of the London District, was one of the first to realise that the time had come for the old pontifical college of Douay, which had done such splendid work for the Catholic religion ever since the sixteenth century, to be replaced by other colleges on English soil; one of which would clearly have to be near the Metropolis. So his thoughts

<sup>1</sup> Dom Norbert Birt, *History of Downside School*, p. 114. See also *The Catholic Magazine* for 1831.

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naturally turned to his own little school at Old Hall Green, and the possibility of building there the new Douay. He wrote accordingly to Bishop Milner to ask his opinion, and received a favourable response. Bishop Milner was doubtful whether the seminary ought not perhaps to remain at Douay, but recommended the setting up of 'a good Grammar School' to take the boys. He thought that Douay could be improved upon for their education; for, he said, "I am sure that many schools in England and in particular the College or school in this city [of Winchester] teach Latin and Greek in less time and in a more solid manner than ever they did at our Colleges."

The foundation of St Edmund's College followed immediately after this letter, which was dated 27th October 1793. Fortified by Milner's opinion, Dr Douglass hesitated no longer. The following is from his Diary:—

"1793. On the 12th November I took Messrs William Beauchamp and John Law to Old Hall, and on the 16th, the feast of St Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, we commenced studies and established the new College there, a substitute for Douay. Mr Thomas Cook, who had been at Old Hall Green half a year employed in teaching the children, and Mr John Devereux joined the other two.

"These four communicated at my hands. I said Mass, and after Mass exposed the Blessed Sacrament, and these four, with Mr Potier, sang the *O Salutaris*, *Pange Lingua*, and *Laudate Dominum omnes Gentes ad finem*.

"Thus was the new College instituted, under the patronage of St Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, the afore-mentioned students recommencing their studies in Divinity. *Felix, faustumque sit.*"

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After a short time there arrived at Old Hall Mr Coombes, whose escape on the way to Doullens has been mentioned. Within a few more weeks some twenty more had arrived, and these, with the thirty boys already at Mr Potier's school, brought the total number of students up to fifty-five.

Dr Douglass did not at once obtain general support for his scheme. The prevailing opinion was that there was not room for more than one Catholic college in England to take the place of Douay, and sentiment was divided as to whether this one college should be in the North or the South. Dr Douglass had the advantage of being first in the field, with an existing school and an actual course of theology in being. But Dr Gibson, Vicar Apostolic of the North, was a man of much energy and large ideas, and he held that, as there were more Catholics in the North than in the South, the college ought to be there. To meet Dr Douglass's argument of a school in being, he pointed to a tiny school he also had, at Tudhoe, near Durham. The question was complicated by rumours that 'the Gentlemen from Liege' were contemplating a move; but this was premature. Some 'Cisalpine' peers, who wanted a more liberal administration, were also talking of starting a college of their own. Milner, on second thoughts, swung round to support the North, but remained firm in his opinion that school and seminary ought not to be united in the same college or under one roof. "It is to be noticed," he said, "that the place of education for our gentry must be liable to much more dissipation than took place abroad. There must be still more of fiddling, dancing, drawing, spouting, &c., or else the College will not take, and some Cisalpine school will have the means for doing irreparable mischief."



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It is not to be wondered at that considerable difference of opinion existed as to what should be done. It was not one college only, but a number, which were being ended on the Continent. It was the end of an era; and the future was uncertain. Colleges and schools started in England without great previous forethought, even if the money could be got to found them, might easily interfere with one another. Nor was it a time of great unity among Catholics. There were the interests of the Bishops and secular clergy to be considered, and also those of the Jesuits and Benedictines, and these three bodies did not agree closely, and no one of them was inclined to subordinate their own interests to those of either the other two. Then, to add to the difficulties of the position, there were 'the Cisalpine gentlemen' insisting, and in this matter quite rightly, that they must have a school on more modern lines and not quite so much dominated by ecclesiastical control. They had already taken steps to found this school at Oscott, and Dr Bew had been nominated as its head.

On the whole things seemed, in the early part of 1794, to be shaping in favour of a single secular college to be built at Tudhoe in the North. This plan seemed likely to unite all the conflicting interests. The Vicars Apostolic issued jointly a printed appeal for it, dated 20th June 1794. Bishop Gibson had by then discovered a better site than Tudhoe, and said he would be ready to start almost immediately. Then, suddenly, all was changed. The 'Cisalpines' came to an agreement with Bishop Talbot and decided to give him their building at Oscott, on condition that a considerable leaven of lay influence was allowed. "The Governors in conjunction with the President and Vice-President were to have the direction of all the lay scholars." Under these conditions they would be responsible

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financially for the conduct of the school. The 'Gentlemen from Liege,' too, found themselves obliged to leave sooner than they expected, and Stonyhurst promised to be a very formidable rival to the proposed northern college. Dr Douglass plucked up courage once more, and turned again to his projects at Old Hall, and on 22nd November 1794 he issued an appeal for subscriptions to build a college there.

Three months after this, on 2nd March 1795, the imprisoned students of Douay and St Omers, having been liberated, arrived in England. Once again the dispute of North and South was revived. It was resolved eventually that Dr Stapleton, the late rector of St Omers, should be placed in charge of a school for the Humanities at Old Hall, while the 'new Douay' should be built in the North, and carry on the studies for the priesthood under Mr Daniel, the last President of Douay, who was in law the proprietor of all the monies belonging to the old Douay. But once again all was changed by an unexpected incident. Mr Sone, a rich miller of Bedhampton, near Havant, left £10,000 to the London District for the foundation of a college. Dr Douglass, as soon as he had received the promise through Dr Poynter, at once set about building his new college at Old Hall.

## THE BUILDINGS OF ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE

This decision was eventually made on the advice of no less a person than Mr Pitt, then Prime Minister. He pointed out that much less opposition would be aroused in Protestant circles if it were merely an existing institution enlarged and not a new college founded. The project had also the very powerful support of Mgr Erskine, who just then came from Rome on a

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mission to England, being sent directly by the Pope. Dr Stapleton took Mr Potier's place as the first President of the new college, which absorbed the old school, Mr Potier remaining on in charge of the school department.

The new buildings which were now necessary, and rendered possible by Mr Sone's opportune legacy, were designed by Mr James Taylor of Islington. They were planned more for utility than beauty, like most Catholic buildings of the period, and well deserved the name which Pugin gave them of "the priest factory." The elevation, which still survives intact, though it has since been transformed by creepers and by a terrace made in front, then appeared admirably adapted for a factory or a gaol. The first stone was laid on the 19th August 1795. It was roofed in by September 1798, the building having been much delayed by the uncertainties of the position. It was designed to accommodate sixty-five students, who were to be reading philosophy or theology, while the old buildings at the back continued to be used for the purposes of the school.

The original chapel of the school, still in existence in the attics of the 'Old College,' was still serving as the chapel for the new college in 1799, though it must have been very much too small. In that year there took place a sacrilegious robbery, in which some of the servants of the college were involved. They stole all the silver vessels of the sacristy and broke open the tabernacle on the altar. The Hosts contained in the Ciborium they emptied into the Corporal, and laid it on the bottom of the tabernacle, with the door, which they had broken off, on the top. Then they sunk the whole tabernacle, which cannot have been very large, to the bottom of a pond near the house. In their hurry they left some of the Hosts floating on the water,



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and this led to the discovery of the rest. A little memorial chapel was put up in reparation.

Dr Stapleton, who had superintended the whole of the erection of the college, which cost altogether some £12,000, was appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District in 1800, and the Presidency, thus rendered vacant, was given to Dr Poynter, who had been for some time acting as Vice-President. He determined to go on with the buildings of the college, which were still far from sufficient. He built in 1805 the old chapel, which in 1853 became the study-place; he also provided a new refectory. But both of these have long since been replaced by other buildings more suitable for the purpose, and need not detain us. But the college as he left it remained unchanged for nearly fifty years.

Before we go on to later developments it will be worth our while to pause and recapitulate the various points of interest connected with the old college. At the back is a house still known as 'the Hermitage.' No one knew why, till, long after, it was discovered that there actually was a Hermitage on the spot before the Reformation founded soon after 1200. So it turns out that when Bishop Talbot bought the property in 1772 he was, all unawares, acquiring a site with a long Catholic history. The old chapel of the school still remains, unaccountably neglected, in the attic of the 'Old College.' The first chapel of the new college was on the first floor, and is now used as a museum. Here Bishop Stapleton and Bishop Poynter were both consecrated and many priests ordained. The next chapel was the present study-place, now used by Douglass House. This was the chapel for fifty years. Here were consecrated no less than seven Bishops, and most of the priests for Southern England were ordained here

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during the first half of the nineteenth century. It  
would be well, one would think, to put up a tablet  
recording the fact somewhere on its walls.

### THE CHAPEL

With the 'second spring' and the arrival of the Oxford converts St Edmund's, which as a lay school had not fulfilled the promise of its first years, awoke to a renewed life. Dr Wiseman came from Oscott, and became the first Archbishop of Westminster. The construction of the new chapel was begun almost exactly contemporaneously with the conversions of Mr W. G. Ward and of Dr Newman. It was entrusted to Mr Pugin, then at the height of his fame, and he certainly succeeded in making a wonderful use of the rather poor materials which alone the funds available could provide. The first stone was laid 17th September 1845, and it was opened and consecrated on Whit-Monday 1853. It owed its existence to the devoted work of Dr Griffiths, who had been President and became Vicar Apostolic of the London District, and the first service held within it was his own funeral. We may remember how exactly the same thing occurred with Cardinal Vaughan and his great work of Westminster Cathedral.

The feature of the chapel which at once strikes a stranger is the double carved screen which separates the choir from the ante-chapel. There are two altars under the screen, and on the top now stands the organ. This was very much against Pugin's own wish. It was given by Mr W. G. Ward, and led Pugin to say to him that "he ought not to be allowed to reside in the vicinity of so fine a screen. I would assign him a first floor opposite Warwick Street Chapel. Who could have

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thought that the glorious man I knew at Oxford could have fallen so low."

Certainly the chapel is a very fine and beautiful building, one of the most satisfactory works that Pugin ever did, for it is free from the darkness so many of his buildings suffer from. The windows are large, especially the east window, which is a glorious piece of geometrical tracery, and the chapel is arranged after the fashion of a monastic choir or college chapel with seats running lengthways. Since it was originally built several additions have been made to it, especially the Lady Chapel on the north side of the ante-chapel, which was the gift of three brothers named Luck, who were all educated at the college, and one of whom became Bishop of Auckland, New Zealand. Another notable addition is the Shrine Chapel of St Edmund, built largely through the generosity of Mr Granville Ward, to receive the great relic of the arm of St Edmund which was brought from Pontigny in 1853. Lastly, there has been added, the gift of Cardinal Bourne, a magnificent 'Galilee porch,' itself a complete church, which was designed by Mr Walters and opened in 1921. Its object is to provide a chapel for the lay boys, which can be used either as complete in itself, or, when the great doors are thrown open, as an adjunct to the main building, enabling those who are seated in it to follow easily the ceremonies of High Mass at the chief altar.

### LIFE IN OLD ST EDMUND'S

No complete copy exists of the original rules at St Edmund's. The old rules of Douay were carried on as far as possible unchanged. But we have a set of rules dating from about 1799, which remained in force up to 1852.



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The officers of the college in this list are divided into three classes, 'seniors, professors, and prefects.' The seniors consisted of the president, vice-president, superior of the preparatory school, prefect of studies, general prefect, and procurator. The superior of the preparatory school at that time was probably Mr Potier, who had been in charge of the whole before the new college started, and this probably accounts for his precedence. The professors are what would be called masters at most English schools. The prefects are defined as "persons to superintend the students in the dormitories, in the chapel, and in the time of recreation." They were and are senior boys appointed for this purpose. At Douay they had sometimes been called 'pedagogues,' and had been taken from the 'divines' or students in theology. The name of 'prefect' is interesting, and it occurs in no other Catholic school of the period, though the office has since been introduced in several. It looks as if we have here a genuine survival from old English Catholic customs, and as if the Winchester and New College men, who, as we have elsewhere shown, formed the greater number of the original founders of Douay, had continued this custom from their old school. But the evidence is too slight to enable us to speak with any certainty on this point.

The day's work was apportioned much on the old lines. Rise at 6, meditation at 6.30 for all except 'the lay boys of the top dormitory,' Mass at 7, then an hour's study before breakfast at 8.30. Study again from 9 to 1, followed by dinner and recreation. Study from 3 to 7, with half an hour's break, supper at 7, night prayers at 8.30. There were three half-holidays, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. On Sunday High Mass was at 11, preceded by an hour of study, but after-

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wards these hours were reversed and Mass was at 10, with study after.

This course of study was meant primarily for students for the priesthood, although there were many boys in the school who were lay boys and had no intention of being ordained. The whole course, if a boy came young, was designed to last for thirteen or fourteen years. Assuming that a boy came at ten years old, he would be placed in 'figures' in the preparatory school, and he would remain in that school until he reached the third year of 'rudiments' and passed into the upper school. Then he would progress by annual removes through 'grammar,' 'poetry,' 'syntax,' and 'rhetoric' on to two years of philosophy and three or four years of theology until he was at last ordained. But many, of course, came later, and did not at first reach the position suitable for their age.

This mixture of the two classes of boys, those going on for the priesthood and those preparing for the world, had grown up at Douay from the difficult circumstances of the time. It is not in itself quite satisfactory and has often led to difficulties; if the two classes of 'church boys' and 'lay boys' are kept distinct. Bishop Milner, as we have seen, wanted the two classes separate; at any rate he desired the older students, those in philosophy and theology, to be in a different place from the boys. But Bishop Douglass decided otherwise, and determined to keep on the old and peculiar system which had grown up at Douay unchanged. The same decision was come to at Ushaw. It had its justification to some extent in old English custom, for, both at Winchester and Eton and doubtless in other schools, there was this same mixture of 'scholars,' who wore the clerical dress and were designed for the priesthood, and commoners or oppidans, who lived outside and had

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no intention for the most part of seeking ordination. At Douay, as also at Old Hall and at Ushaw, the two classes were mixed perhaps more closely than was desirable, if any distinction at all was to be made. But quite recently at Old Hall an attempt has been made to get a wider separation, and by means of a 'house system' something on the lines of that in vogue in most of the English public schools, to approach more closely to the plan which has logically developed from the great schools of the past, Winchester and Eton, in their Catholic days.

### CHANGES IN MORE RECENT YEARS

Cardinal Wiseman, when he came to the London District, was not satisfied with the school and seminary he found at St Edmund's. He appointed as President Dr Weathers, well known in later life as the saintly Bishop of Amycela; and, as Vice-President, Father Herbert Vaughan, later to become Cardinal, but then newly ordained. Dr Weathers was an Edmundian and ultra-conservative, unwilling to make any change. Fr Vaughan was young and fresh from Rome, and eager to make improvements and to get a more missionary spirit into the college. For a time there was a good deal of friction. At one time the Cardinal had the idea of entrusting the whole work to Manning and the oblates of St Charles'. But the Chapter of Westminster intervened, and the project was given up. No further change was made in Wiseman's time.

Archbishop Manning, when he succeeded Wiseman, determined to get the education of his clergy more into his own hands. He built a new seminary at Hammer-smith and removed the 'Divines' thither, leaving St Edmund's to be a school for boys and nothing more.



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This state of affairs lasted from 1869 to 1904, a period of thirty-four years.

Dr Weathers had gone with the 'Divines' to Hammersmith as the first rector of the new seminary. Mgr Patterson, a convert from Harrow and Oxford, succeeded him at St Edmund's. He at once set to work to 'civilise' the place, which till then had remained very rugged and primitive in its arrangements. To him are due the terraces in front of the main building, the paintings in the 'ambulacrum,' and the new library, now the dining-room of Douglass House, the library having been moved into the old refectory. His main reforms were, however, rather in the details of domestic routine, and cannot easily be chronicled.

The great enemy that St Edmund's has always had to contend with is its want of endowment. After the 'Divines' had gone there was not enough revenue from the boys to maintain the work. When Manning died and Vaughan succeeded, in 1892, as Archbishop of Westminster, the financial position was acute. He dealt with it drastically, by closing and selling Manning's new seminary at Hammersmith and sending his students to Oscott, which then became the central seminary for the south of England. To St Edmund's he sent a young priest in whom he had much confidence, Mgr Edmund Ward, who thus began a long and successful tenure of the Presidency which lasted until he became first Bishop of Brentwood, twenty-five years later.

To estimate the work that Mgr Ward did for St Edmund's one must realise the difficulties of the position. St Edmund's, as we have seen, was started without endowments, and has never had any. The Douay property was all lost in the French Revolution. True, a large sum was recovered as compensation from the French. But it never reached St Edmund's or Ushaw.

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The Government of the day—it seems incredible nowadays that such a thing should have been possible even a hundred years ago—gave a decision in its own favour that to hand the money to its proper owners would be to devote it to superstitious uses. It was decided to spend it, on a somewhat singular doctrine of *ci-prés*, on refurnishing Windsor Castle and the Pavilion at Brighton for George IV.

When Cardinal Bourne succeeded to Cardinal Vaughan in 1903 matters had been much advanced at St Edmund's by the efforts of Mgr Ward. The school was improved in many ways, and the financial difficulty was less than it had been. Cardinal Bourne, desiring to have his own theological students under his own eye rather than to continue the system by which they were being educated at Oscott, determined to bring them back once more to Old Hall. It was obvious, of course, that they could not come back to their old quarters. The school had grown, and ideas of the accommodation necessary for modern schools had grown also, and all the available accommodation was already in use. Cardinal Bourne, therefore, resolved to build them a complete seminary of their own, entirely distinct from the school though built on college ground, and adjoining the other older buildings. There the life of the seminary is carried on, altogether separate from that of the boys. The two colleges never meet except on certain great occasions in the chapel.

When he had accomplished this work, Cardinal Bourne further determined to make great changes in the school also, so as to make it a complete and fully equipped Public School. For this purpose he divided the school into three houses, which are structurally divided and separately organised, and not merely categories for purposes of competition. Of these, one,

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known as 'Douglass House' is entirely given up to those boys who are hoping to go on for the priesthood. The other two, 'Challoner's' and 'Talbot's,' accommodate the rest of the school. He further built, at very considerable cost, a range of new school buildings at the rear, to provide school-rooms and laboratories. The school now has all the accommodation necessary for development, and it will, no doubt, rapidly grow in numbers and in other ways as soon as all these improvements have had time to become known. At the present time there are about one hundred and twenty boys.

### THE LATIN PLAYS

St Edmund's has been second only to the Oratory in its devotion to the practice of producing Latin plays. The plays as adapted by Cardinal Newman for this purpose were generally used, and there were notable performances of the *Aulularia* and other plays in the early years of the present century under the direction of Dr Alfred Herbert and of Canon Edwin Burton, who later on succeeded Mgr Ward as President. These plays as produced at St Edmund's did not follow the severe traditions of Newman at the Oratory or of the plays at Westminster School, but a good deal of by-play was introduced, as also extra characters who had no speaking part. In more recent years these plays have been superseded by Latin farces written for the occasion, generally from the pen of Father Ronald Knox, which, although very amusing, have not had quite the educational value of the older plays.

### ST HUGH'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL

For many years the younger boys at St Edmund's have been lodged in a separate house, quite at the other



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end of the range of buildings, and organised separately in every way. This house was originally built by Mr William George Ward, when he was attached to the college, not long after his conversion, as professor of theology. It has now been enlarged and made suitable for its new purposes, and ranks as one of the best Preparatory Schools in the Archdiocese of Westminster. The boys here are too young to have been as yet adopted as candidates for the priesthood, and are, therefore, exclusively 'lay.'

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SECULAR TRADITION

#### ST CUTHBERT'S COLLEGE, USHAW

THE great college of Ushaw, four miles from Durham, claims to be pre-eminently the successor of *Les Grands Anglais* at Douay. It may be true that St Edmund's was first in the field, on the score of the entry in Bishop Douglass's Diary, though Ushaw contests even this. It would say that, after all, this denotes rather the pious intentions and desires of the Bishop than the actual foundation of a college, and would point out that St Edmund's itself acknowledged the justice of this contention by keeping its jubilee in 1845 ; thus taking the appointment of the first President, Dr Stapleton, in 1795, as marking the actual start. But, however this may be, Ushaw claims that it is more really Douay, more faithful to its old traditions, than St Edmund's has ever been. St Edmund's has a true descent from Douay,—that is conceded,—but it is only one-third part of its triple descent from Douay, St Omers, and Standon Lordship, whereas Ushaw is Douay and nothing else, with no external admixture to contaminate the exactness of its traditions. How that claim is substantiated we must now go on to show.

We have seen in the last chapter<sup>1</sup> how eager Bishop Gibson, the Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District, who himself had been President of Douay, was to have

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 113.

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'the new Douay' established in the North and under his jurisdiction. The legacy left by Mr Sone to Bishop Douglass had settled the question against him so far that the building of St Edmund's, Old Hall, was decided upon; but Bishop Gibson would not give way, and insisted that at least his own students should have a home in the North, even if the idea of having a single house for all England had to be given up. To his pertinacity—which some who thought there was no room for two such colleges called obstinacy—we owe the existence of the great college of Ushaw.

The first idea had been to build at Tudhoe, where a Mr Storey had a small school for boys under fourteen. This school had an advertisement in the *Catholic Directory* for 1797 as 'TUDHOE ACADEMY near DURHAM.' Twenty-two pounds per annum was the pension, so it was very cheap. "Recreation," we learn, was "allowed on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. On these days the students walk out, attended by their instructors, and proper care is taken that no injury is received from rain or intense cold." But eventually the idea of developing this school was given up, and the Bishop bought a property at Crook Hall, where he formally established a college on 15th October 1794. Here it remained for seven years. The old customs were at once re-established. George Haydock writes the day after his arrival: "I have spent just one day in the old Douay customs, for Crook aims to come as near them as circumstances will allow."

Crook Hall was a plain rectangular building of stone, built perhaps about eighty years before, in a rather severe style. It was not large enough for the purpose of a college, and its situation was bleak and cheerless. It was, therefore, regarded only as a temporary refuge, and the search for a more suitable property was carried



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on. Meanwhile Crook Hall was strained to its utmost capacity. Every room was made to serve two purposes. The hall, immediately within the entrance, was refectory and also the Divines' school. The rest of the ground floor provided classrooms and general study-hall. The first floor gave the President's and Vice-President's rooms and the chapel in the front half, while the back half provided sleeping-rooms for all the students above philosophy. The Vice-President's room was a mere cupboard, some 8 feet by 6, off the President's. Here lived Dr Lingard, and in it he wrote his *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*. The attics were used as dormitories for the boys, and the Prefect's room. There was no guest-room. The Bishop, when he came, shared the President's room. Other arrangements were primitive. The establishment did not boast a bell, and rising time at six in the morning was marked by Mr Eyre, the President, who was apparently the most wakeful person in the house, putting his head out of his door and calling at the top of his voice, "Sally, Sally." This served at once to waken the domestic, and to warn the Prefect and others that it was time to get up.

In the chapel, which was simply one of the rooms on the first floor, the services of the Church were carried out strictly, but with insufficient store of vestments. Indeed, the college only boasted one cassock. Still, High Mass and vespers were duly celebrated. The scene at vespers, with elaborate ceremonial carried out in "a combination of surplice, a tailcoat, kneebreeches and grey stockings," must have been grotesque, though probably all were soon accustomed to it. The music was of a high standard, and unaccompanied.

There could be no doubt that Bishop Gibson had proved himself right, and that there was room for a

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second college. A move to more capacious premises was a necessity. In January 1804 building was commenced at Ushaw, where a suitable site had at last been obtained by purchase. Another 'new Douay' was to rise upon this spot.

In 1795, soon after Crook Hall had been occupied, a curious episode had taken place. Bishop Gibson arrived one day in company with Mr Daniel, the last President of Douay. The next day Mr Eyre resigned the Presidency and Mr Daniel was installed in his place. Before the week was out Dr Stapleton, the President of St Edmund's, arrived. He was closeted, so Dr Lingard used to tell, for hours with Mr Daniel, and the next day Mr Daniel resigned, and Mr Eyre was again re-installed. The key to the proceeding probably lay in the fact that Mr Daniel, who had never formally resigned the Presidency of Douay, was still, in the eyes of the law, the legal owner of all Douay property. It looks like an intention to claim that property and the sole succession to Douay for the northern college, and as if a compromise had been then formulated to regard both Old Hall and Ushaw as joint heirs of the old college. Moreover, Mr Daniel's resignation was probably due to the fear that the French Government might refuse to accept him as still President of Douay and to pay over the money to him, if he were actually President of another college elsewhere.

### THE BUILDING OF USHAW

The 'priest factory' at Old Hall had given, apparently, so much satisfaction, that the same architects were employed to erect the new college at Ushaw. That is why the main fronts of the two colleges are so much alike. But Ushaw was planned on a larger scale than

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Old Hall, and the stone of which it is built is much more effective than the other's brick. From the first it was to be a quadrangle, of which the main front was only one side. By July, 1808, enough had been completed to allow the Crook Hall community to move in. The 'Little Lads,' as they call the boys at Ushaw, were the first to come, then the philosophers and divines, and last of all the President, in all five professors and forty-seven students. Crook Hall was a thing of the past, left slowly to decay, and St Cuthbert's College was a living entity. The date was the 2nd August 1808.

The original quadrangle then erected, which still stands, though now adjoined by many other buildings handsomer than itself, sufficed for all the needs of the college for thirty years, till 1838. In front were the study-place, the reception-room, and the public-room. Behind these the cloister path was of double width, the south ambulacrum. At the back were the refectory, the kitchens, and the chapel. The two sides were occupied by less important rooms and offices, class-rooms and play-rooms, the same room serving both purposes. In the centre was a large open court into which opened the windows of the cloister, or ambulatory as it was called. The divines' school was on the west side; the philosophers' on the east, where also was the door opening on to the 'Bounds' or playgrounds.

The chapel to modern eyes would have seemed bare and even Protestant. There were no images or pictures, except one of the Dead Christ above the High Altar. The tabernacle had a curious contrivance which allowed the inner case to be lowered bodily at night into the middle of the altar, thus providing for the safety of the Blessed Sacrament. Several customs strange to us were observed. The celebrant and minister of High Mass, as well as all the divines in surplices, always



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had their hair powdered, and a powder-box was part of the equipment of every divine. The vestments and surplices were French in style, and French customs too had been brought from Douay. For instance, two 'cope-men' always sat in the sanctuary during High Mass. At vespers the celebrant sat in the middle of the centre bench facing the altar, with his 'cope-men,' sometimes one, and sometimes two on each side, and a choir was formed of some sixteen divines who sat in surplices on two benches, one on each side of the chapel facing each other.

The refectory, which still serves the purpose, though now enlarged, was a large room 61 feet by 37 feet, but rather low. There was a fire at the east end, and here were the carving-tables. The tables ran along the sides, and there was a 'top table' for the professors across the western end, just as in any college hall. Meals were taken in silence, and reading was the rule. The tables were plain deal, scrubbed with sand, plates were of pewter, with steel two-pronged forks and tin or pewter cups with handles. The one plate served for the whole meal.

The lavatory arrangements were much as in other Catholic colleges of the time. There was the usual trough with taps above it, and tin basins. At one side hung two roller towels for the use of the Big Lads, and in the middle three for the Little Lads. On the other side were 'divisions' for keeping brushes and combs.

Upstairs, the President's and Vice-President's rooms were on each side of the main staircase. The library was over the study-place, private rooms for the divines and philosophers occupied the west gallery, while three large dormitories took up most of the space on the other two. The Bishop's room was the one next to the President, and the infirmary was opposite.

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### BUILDINGS, 1837-1863

For thirty years, as has been said, this accommodation sufficed. Then there was appointed as President, in 1837, Dr Charles Newsham, who was to hold the Presidency for six and twenty years, and may almost be regarded as Ushaw's second founder. He found the college a simple quadrangle: he left it the far-stretching and magnificent series of buildings that it is to-day. He built a new church, the exhibition hall, the library, infirmary, museum, lavatories, new kitchens and large farm-buildings, the Junior College, the chapels of St Joseph, the Holy Family, St Charles and St Michael. The refectory was enlarged and altered so as to make it available for larger numbers, and at the same time fully dignified and suitable for its purpose; new gas-works were erected, and a great number of other improvements were made in the ground about the college. It is an astounding record for one man to have accomplished, and only a very bold and courageous man could have faced the expenditure. Had things turned out unfavourably, he would have been greatly blamed. But fortunately all went well, and the college prospered greatly under his care. He did everything on a large scale and without skimping, and the consequence is that the college as he left it suffices still for every need, and has required scarcely any enlargement or alteration of importance since his time, except only in the case of the church of St Cuthbert, of which we must now speak.

### ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH

The chief work for which Dr Newsham will be remembered is, of course, the building of St Cuthbert's Church, which was begun in 1844 and consecrated in

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1847. The architect was the great Pugin, then fresh from his triumphs at Oscott and elsewhere, and at the height of his fame. He was building the new chapel at St Edmund's, Old Hall, at the same time. The new church was all that could be wished, built on the lines of a university college chapel, with stalls on either side, but unfortunately it was planned on too small a scale. Seats were provided for only one hundred and thirty students, that being regarded as the maximum ever likely to be required. But by the time that thirty years had passed it was utterly inadequate, so rapid had been the growth of Catholicism in the North. There was nothing to do but take it down and to rebuild it on a larger scale. The work this time was entrusted to Messrs Dunn and Hansom, who were responsible for much of the best Gothic work of the period. Dunn was the artist of the partnership, and Hansom (the inventor of the hansom cab which has immortalised his name) was the practical man. So the saying ran that "Dunn saw it was handsome, and Hansom saw it was done." In this case, at any rate, it must be admitted that they produced a really fine piece of work, fine enough to console us almost entirely for the loss of Pugin's earlier building.

The collegiate plan was still adhered to. There are three tiers of benches on either side, and returned against the screen to the west. The highest tier consists of stalls, with *misereres* and a carved canopy overhanging the seats. There are six bays to the choir, of which the second from the screen on the gospel side forms the organ chamber. The ceiling is a barrel-shaped vault with a coving at the base. On the south side of the sanctuary is a statue of our Lady of Clemency. Every evening at the end of Benediction or night prayers all the students face towards this statue, and



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sing the hymn "Maria Mater Gratiae" in our Lady's honour.

The High Altar is very striking, and is entirely of alabaster, with a throne for exposition above the tabernacle and adoring angels on either side. The spire above the throne is canopy work, rising to the great height of forty feet. The east end of the church is aspidal, with fine wooden panels round the apse.

A second statue of our Lady, called our Lady of Help, stands in the ante-chapel outside the screen. Here take place the May devotions and other special devotions to our Blessed Lady.

## THE LIBRARY

On the opposite side of the main front of the original quadrangle, balancing the church, Dr Newsham placed the great library. It was built by the munificence of a single venerable priest, the Rev. Thomas Wilkinson of Kendal. By long self-denial, carried on through half a century as a mission priest, he had collected a large and valuable library. An opportune legacy gave him the opportunity of providing a suitable abode for all these books, by committing them to the care of the college to which he owed his education. It is a very fine room, 120 feet long by 30 feet wide, rising to a height of 30 feet at the apex of its arched roof, and is built to contain about fifty thousand volumes. It is, however, already full, and the problem of finding space for new accessions is beginning to press. Among its treasures are a number of illuminated books of 'Hours'; the old Sarum Missal that before the Reformation belonged to the parish of Esh, close by; and the original MSS. of several of Lingard's works, including

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part of the *History*, and also that of Cardinal Wiseman's *Fabiola*. Another interesting exhibit is a parchment roll of prayers, given by Henry VIII, while still Prince Henry, to Sir William Thomas de Caermarthen. Dr Lingard left all his books to this library, as also did Bishop Dicconson and several others. The work of building the library was commenced in 1849, and it was finished in 1851. Mr Wilkinson died in 1857, being then the last survivor of the priests ordained at Douay.

### LINGARD, WISEMAN, AND THOMPSON

Among the original eight, Douay men every one of them, who began the new life at Crook Hall in 1795, was one who was destined to win a great place in the literary world. This was John Lingard, whose *History of England* was the first to break into the great Protestant tradition which for three centuries had held the field uncontradicted. This *History* is a very notable performance when it is realised that most of the documents on which he relied were still uncalendared, and lying in considerable confusion in the national repositories. He left his portrait to the college, to which he was always most faithful and devoted, and, at his own request, he was buried in the college cemetery.

Nicholas Wiseman, another name of which Ushaw is justly proud, came to the college in 1810 at the age of seven. He remained there for the whole course of his Humanities, and then left for the English college at Rome to begin his Philosophy.

One more great name must be mentioned, and that is Francis Thompson. He did not distinguish himself particularly in school life, but it was at Ushaw that he learnt the fervent faith and the wealth of language which

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made him much the most notable of recent Catholic poets.

### THE JUNIOR COLLEGE

The younger boys, or 'Little Lads,' have a college to themselves complete with a chapel, which is dedicated to St Aloysius. It is not very large, being only 64 feet long by 22 feet wide, but very devotional and attractive. The two colleges communicate by means of a corridor, but are otherwise entirely distinct. Of recent years, on account of the great saving of labour resulting from having only one kitchen, all the 'Little Lads' come along this corridor into the main building for their meals. The old refectory of the Junior College, thus set free, has been utilised for a gymnasium.

### THE INFIRMARY

The building which is now used for the infirmary was once the Junior College, before the newer building was erected. It fills its new rôle admirably, and might well have been built for the purpose. It communicates with the kitchen by means of a long corridor, which can be closed in case of infection. But its most remarkable feature, one which is shared with no other school infirmary which we know of, is the chapel on the upper floor. The two large bedrooms or 'wards' on either side of it have windows opening into it. When these windows are opened it is easily and comfortably possible for the inmates of these two rooms to hear Mass from their beds.

### LIFE AT MODERN USHAW

The first thing which strikes a visitor to Ushaw on arriving at the college is that he has stepped back half



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a century or more in time. It is not that Ushaw is in any way behind the times or lacking in modern improvements. The visitor will find himself lodged not only comfortably but almost palatially, with electric light and everything he could desire. It is rather the spirit of the place, so very faithful to the old Douay traditions, everywhere reminiscent of a more spacious and leisurely age, when dinner was at half-past five, as it still is at Ushaw, and tea was served afterwards at nine, as it still is; and open fireplaces blazed cheerfully and wastefully; and wide and long corridors employed an army of scrubbers. More than in almost any other place in England one has the sensation of being back in the great days of the Victorian epoch, the age pre-eminently of solid comfort and solid thought. If one of the old Douay priests could come to life he would find himself almost completely at home in modern Ushaw, where nothing has been changed without good reason, and the fine Douay spirit still reigns supreme.

The college is still to-day pre-eminently an ecclesiastical one. A boy who is destined for the Church may come to it at an early age and go through the whole course of his studies, until, at twenty-three or twenty-four, he leaves it as a full-fledged priest to begin his life on the mission. In the junior portions there are also a certain number of lay boys admitted, just as there were at Douay and long before that, at Winchester, to share the life and the studies. But the main object of the college, an object which is never allowed to pass out of view, is the education of the clergy for the northern dioceses. Altogether the students number about two hundred. Ushaw has never allowed itself to be dominated by the modern system of external examinations, and the course goes on very much on the old solid lines of traditional Catholic education, un-

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affected by what is happening elsewhere. For a short time the matriculation examinations of the London University were taken by all, but it was soon generally felt that their effect was not wholly to the advantage of Ushaw education. More recently some use has been made of the courses at Durham University. The London matriculation is still taken if for any special reason it is desirable.

### GAMES AND SPORTS

The great game at Ushaw, one to which even cricket must yield in popularity, is the game of 'Cat.' It is a game of the nature of baseball, a glorified form of rounders, and, there can be little doubt, comes down, through Douay, from Elizabethan times. Just as 'Stonyhurst Cricket' preserved for so long the characteristics of an earlier form of the game, now lost in the greater popularity of later developments, so also is 'Cat' clearly a survival of an ancient sport. But 'Stonyhurst Cricket' is dead and buried, and nothing remains of it but its tombstones, while 'Cat' is full of vitality and interest, and shows no sign at all of any diminution in popularity.

The game is not an easy one to describe, especially by one who has never played it. There are seven players on each side. There is a ring with seven holes, which are refuges for players as they run round the ring. If the ball can be put into any hole when there is no player there within the length of a 'cat-stick,' the whole side is out, and the fielding side takes its place. The seven fielders or 'fags' take their places as assigned to them in the field, just as at cricket. The names of the fielding-places are 'Corner,' 'Behind Corner,' 'Furthest-Out,' 'Second Furthest-Out,' 'Top-

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Plat,' 'Bottom Plat,' and 'Feeder.' The 'Feeder' throws the ball to a given height and the 'Striker' hits it before it falls. As it flies through the air the whole side rush round the ring, from hole to hole, as far as it is safe to proceed before the ball is 'fagged.' The next one who is at the home hole, then strikes it in his turn. After a certain number of holes, about twenty, have been run in this way, they may try for 'cross,' which consists in striking the ball to such a distance that the whole side have time to leave their holes, run to the centre, cross their sticks, and get back to their holes before the ball is fagged. Meanwhile, a catch made in the field or a ball put into any hole that is unguarded puts the whole side out. The 'crosses' are the only things which count for the score, so the side that has secured the greater number of crosses wins the game. The cat-balls and bats are always home-made. The bats are of ash, the balls a compound of pitch and tallow skilfully built up on a prepared foundation. The game is most exciting, and is still played with the greatest enthusiasm.

'Cat' was formerly played at St Edmund's and at Stonyhurst, and another form of it, we believe, is played at the English college at Lisbon. But it is only at Ushaw that it keeps its old pre-eminence.

There is an excellent indoor swimming-bath, 70 feet in length and 30 feet wide, warmed by hot-water pipes, and available at all times of the year. This was opened in 1893. The older open-air bath lies below the college, but is now comparatively rarely used. The ball-places at Ushaw differ from those at the other Catholic schools in several ways. There is a great arc of masonry sweeping round a large part of the bounds. In this sweep are three broad and lofty ball-places, very much like the one at Downside, and between them six



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'racket houses' recessed deeply into the wall, and with an arch some twelve feet high in the middle, the front side being open. The game of 'Racket,' which used to be played in these 'houses,' seems now to have fallen into disuse, but hand-ball is still played in them in various forms.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE SECULAR TRADITION

#### OSCOTT COLLEGE

THE college of Oscott has nowadays long ceased to be employed as a school for boys. But in its earlier days it played a great part, and cannot be left out in any account of the history of English Catholic education. Some few pages therefore must be devoted to the story of this college, which in its day was one of the most celebrated of the Catholic schools of England.

Of all the schools which were begun in England in the year 1794, as a result of the break-up of the various colleges on the Continent, Oscott has some right to claim to be the first. It was first opened in the month of May of that year. Stonyhurst stands second, having been opened in August. Ushaw claims the third place in October. But all these dates may very well be disputed by Old Hall, on the ground of the entry in Bishop Douglass's Diary, and the formal establishment of a successor to Douay as early as 12th November 1793, though Dr Stapleton did not take possession as first President till 1795.

The original house in which Oscott College was founded is about a mile away from the present building. It is now called Maryvale, a name that was given to it by Cardinal Newman and his friends when they went to reside there soon after they were received into the Church. The village had long been the residence of a

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missionary priest, the first of whom, Andrew Bromwich, was arrested and tried for his life in 1680, though he was not actually martyred. In 1752 Bishop Hornyold, coadjutor to Bishop Stanton, the Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District, and his successor, enlarged the house at Oscott to serve as a residence for the Vicar Apostolic, in case the house he was then occupying, Long Birch, near Wolverhampton, had to be given up. It was never actually needed for this purpose, and a little school came to be held there by a Mrs Johnson, as the house was too large now for Mr Parry, the resident priest. This school, however, did not succeed, and was given up in 1775, when Mr Parry was succeeded as missionary by the well-known Mr Berington, a man of considerable literary talent. He left in 1793, and so it came to be that, at that moment of crisis, the mission with its large house was vacant.

A number of English Catholic gentlemen of rather Gallican views, who had formed themselves into a body known as 'the Cisalpine Club,' and whose leader was Lord Petre, were at this time causing some anxiety to the Bishops by their expressed wish for a more liberal scheme of education for their sons than had been available in the very ecclesiastical colleges on the Continent. The repeal of some of the Penal Laws in 1792 had made it possible to start a Catholic school in England, and they were anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity. They turned their eyes towards Oscott, but thought it too small for their purpose. They discussed a house at Hanley, but that also proved impracticable.

Meanwhile Dr Talbot—the Vicar Apostolic who succeeded Dr Hornyold—and Dr Charles Berington, his coadjutor, were also thinking about the foundation of a college, though their plan was mainly to provide for the



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seminarists now that Douay was coming to an end. They decided to use Oscott for this purpose, and appointed Dr Bew, who had been selected by the 'Cisalpines' to take command of *their* school, to be the first President, though as yet there was nothing for him to be President over. So at the end of 1793 the position was just this, that the formation of a seminary for the Midland District was decided upon by the Bishops, and the formation of a school for lay boys was contemplated by the 'Cisalpines,' but as yet no beginning had been actually made of either institution.

The appointment of Dr Bew had been a clever move on the part of the Bishops. It left the Cisalpines without a suitable head for their school, and at the same time went far to reconcile them to the Bishops' plan of a seminary school. The result was, early in 1794, to bring about a combination. The Cisalpines agreed to finance the Bishops' school on condition that they had security for lay influence in the management. The terms of the agreement were that the President and Vice-President should be appointed by the Bishop subject to the approbation of the Governors, and that all religious matters should be under the control of the Bishop, while money matters should belong exclusively to the Governors.

In October 1794, accordingly, there was put forth the first prospectus of the new college. It may be read in full in the *Oscotian* for July 1883, and is a verbose and pretentious document of no very great interest. One or two points only are worth quoting:

"The Scholars as well as their Teachers will frequent the Sacraments at least on the more solemn Festivals, which occur eight Times in the year."

"The higher Scholars will be appointed to assist the lower in the Performance of their tasks, as has been

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practised in other places of Education with singular advantage."

"To excite Emulation, the Scholars in each Class will, once in the month, contend for superiority."

"The Conduct of the Scholars, and their Behavior towards one another, will be diligently attended to. Every rising Symptom of evil Temper or Disposition will be carefully repressed. Generosity, Benevolence, Candour, and Good Breeding will be encouraged."

"Relatively to Rewards and Punishments, Diligence and Docility will ever meet with Encouragement. Faults will be corrected as far as possible, by exciting a sense of Shame, and corporal punishments will be inflicted only in Cases of extreme Necessity."

It may be some help towards estimating the value of statements made in a prospectus, to note that it was the custom of Mr Potts, the first Vice-President and second President of the new college, to flog a boy thrice, morning, noon, and night, for a false concord in his theme. Such is the breadth of interpretation possible under the phrase "only in Cases of extreme Necessity." Mr Potts was "as great a beater" as Udall or Keate.

Mr Potts, though an excellent classic, was no mathematician. He used to say that he would rather have three Greek grammars to learn than one multiplication table. He once sent for a boy to do a 'sum' for him. "The holidays," he said, "begin on Dec. 10th and last three weeks. Which day in January will they end?" When he was told, he gave the boy a 'bang off,' which he could plead next time he was in trouble.

"Every Student shall pay £30 for his Board, Washing and Lodging, one Half Year always to be paid in Advance."

"There will be two Vacations in the Year, a Fortnight at Christmas and a Month at Midsummer."

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The situation of the 'Old College,' as it was called after the new one was built in 1837, was wild and free from buildings, a hollow among the hills. Close by were the beautiful Sutton Woods, where the boys could ramble freely on special holidays. But it was cramped and shut in. The new site was very much better as a site for a school.

As we have seen in the case of the other colleges, the standard of comfort thought requisite for boys before 1800, was not high. The washing-place at this period was a small room with no window, with a trough round three sides. In the trough were several copper basins, and above were taps. The big dormitory was over the chapel, and after morning prayers in the chapel the boys used to race for the basins in the washhouse.

The college under its mixed rule was not a success. In June 1808 it had dwindled down to a total of not more than thirty students all told. Debts had been contracted, involving the Governors in considerable anxiety. In consequence they determined to offer the college unreservedly to Dr Milner, who was now Vicar Apostolic, and to retire from the management altogether. The offer was not very generous, for the College was encumbered with debt; but the Bishop decided to accept it, and accordingly, in the course of the summer of 1808, the college became episcopal property and passed under the sole control of the Bishop.

### ORCOTT UNDER DR MILNER AND HIS SUCCESSORS

Dr Milner lost no time in making changes at the college. Dr Bew resigned, and was succeeded by Mr Potts, while the new Vice-President was Mr Thomas Walsh, afterwards Bishop Walsh, from Sedgley Park. The pension was raised to forty-two guineas. There



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were at that time seven ecclesiastical and about forty lay students. A good many improvements were made in the accommodation for the boys. No longer did Mr Potts stand at the door as the boys came out of Mass and call out the names of those who were to be flogged before breakfast. The chapel was lengthened by the addition of a new sanctuary, and the dormitory above was lengthened to a corresponding extent. After a few years, in 1815, further additions were made, consisting of an ill-built structure called 'the Laura.' Milner also built an ambulacrum, and a large 'Academy Room,' so that the college was altogether more fit for its purpose. The number of students was increasing rapidly, especially when Dr Weedall came to be President after 1826. He it was that really made Oscott, for he continued to be President until 1840. Bishop Milner died in 1826, and was succeeded by Bishop Walsh. Dr Weedall, who had been virtually President for four years, succeeded to the actual occupation of the office, and governed the college with great success until he himself also was raised to the Episcopate. Then as his successor there arrived no less a person than Nicholas Wiseman, who had come from the rectorship of the English college at Rome, newly consecrated Bishop of Melipotamus and coadjutor to the venerable Bishop Walsh. He was made President of Oscott, to give him a residence and a position. It was not, however, to the Oscott we have been describing that he came.

## THE NEW COLLEGE

For some time before this the college had been seen to be far too small for the numbers who had come to it. It was felt that the site, too, could be improved upon, and that it would be better to build an entirely new

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college rather than to attempt to alter and enlarge the old. In 1833 the site upon which the new college stands came into the market, and Dr Weedall, with the permission of Bishop Walsh, determined to buy it. There the foundation was laid in 1835, the design of the whole being entrusted to a Lichfield architect, Mr Potter, who was advised by Mr Kirk, the parish priest of Lichfield, a very remarkable man, who had formerly taught Dr Weedall himself at Sedgley Park.

The new building was, indeed, planned in a way very different from that adopted in 1794. Gone were the days of 'the priest factory,' which formerly had been considered all that was necessary. The Gothic revival was in full swing, and Pugin himself was on the scene criticising everything. Before the work was finished Mr Potter was dismissed and Pugin installed in his place. It might have been better had he been employed from the first, but in any case the new college was a tremendous advance upon anything that had hitherto been accomplished. It had a real collegiate appearance, and was on a quadrangular plan. It seemed too grand altogether for its purpose at the time at which it was built, and some prophetic vision must be conceded both to Dr Walsh and to Dr Weedall for having brought it into being.

It was, then, to this new college that the future Cardinal Wiseman came as President in 1840. The Rev. George Spencer, the Passionist, was already at the college; and, as Vice-President, came the Rev. H. C. Logan, a Cambridge convert. Wiseman, of course, brought much *éclat* to the college, but he was not a good President. Both discipline and studies suffered under his rule. He was not a schoolmaster by temperament or training, and was naturally much occupied with larger schemes. At the same time he retained the reins

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in his own hands too much to allow of the necessary work being done by others.

### OSCOTT, 1853-1889

Dr Weedall, as we have said, was appointed in 1840 to be Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District, and in consequence vacated the Presidency of the college. He was not, however, actually consecrated Bishop, but obtained permission from the Pope to decline the honour. After thirteen years' absence he was once more restored to his old position as President, and came back to the college for which he had done so much. But he came back in broken health, and without much of his old vigour. He held the post for six years, and then died. Oscott has always regarded him as one of her most distinguished sons.

Dr Weedall was succeeded in the Presidency in 1860 by Dr James Spencer Northcote, one of the most distinguished of the Oxford converts. He had followed Newman into the Church in 1846, and during his three years' stay in Italy became a leading authority on Christian antiquities. He held the Presidency for seventeen years.

This period of Dr Northcote's Presidentship was the most brilliant period of Oscott's history as a school. There were about a hundred and thirty boys, of whom the great majority were lay students, not training for the priesthood, and drawn from the best Catholic families. Oscott and Stonyhurst in those years undoubtedly led among Catholic schools. Nor has any school at any time made a greater impression upon its pupils or successfully won their lasting affection. Even to-day old Oscotians wax enthusiastic when they speak of their old school. What Dr Weedall had begun, Dr



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Northcote continued and improved on. The standard of studies was perhaps a little old-fashioned. It is difficult to judge, for at that period few went on to the universities, and it is hard to get a standard of comparison. But to say that the standard was old-fashioned is not to say that it was low. The old Catholic tradition of education was very thorough and very solid. In those days boys were taught and men studied in order to master a subject, not, as now, to pass an examination. Oscott later on fell into line with other Catholic colleges in adopting the London matriculation as the end and test of their studies. There will be many who will doubt whether the studies gained in consequence.

The later years of Dr Northcote's Presidency were less successful. The opening of the Oratory School, so close, could not fail to mean a very formidable rival being created. Then came an unfortunate incident which led to a lawsuit, brought by a dismissed student, which was to some extent successful. But the college continued, nevertheless, on the same lines until 1877, when Northcote retired, through ill-health. In 1888 the golden jubilee of the new college was held, and caused a great rally of its old supporters, and those who had been educated at the school. But the financial position had become impossible; the diocese found itself unable to support three educational establishments, Olton and Cotton Hall as well as Oscott, and so in 1889 Bishop Ilsley, who had only lately succeeded Ullathorne as Bishop of the diocese, determined to close Oscott altogether as a school, and to transfer the ecclesiastical students from Olton, thus making Oscott the central seminary of the diocese, which it had never been before, with Cotton Hall still remaining to take the 'church boys' and any other lay boys who came to

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share their studies. With this act Oscott passes out of our subject altogether. Its subsequent history is exclusively that of a seminary, and not of a school in any sense.

Oscott as a treasure-house of ancient ecclesiastical art is second only to Stonyhurst among Catholic colleges. But this again, now that it has ceased to be a school, hardly concerns our subject.

### GAMES AT OLD OSCOTT

At Oscott at the beginning of the last century, if one had asked a boy what were the principal games at his school, he would not have answered 'cricket and football,' but rather 'bandy and cricket.' Bandy was beyond doubt the chief game. It was played in the 'Bandy-Woods' on a ground surrounded by fine birch trees, and was a kind of hockey. It continued to be played at Oscott till the end of the school came in 1889, so there must be plenty of men who have played it and could describe it. Cricket was played in the summer, very feebly. Lord Stafford, who was at Oscott in 1806, used to say that about six English boys played it, but no Irish. Football had a very inferior place. It was played only by the smaller boys, and in no organised game, so that it never rose much above kickabout. Hand-ball and bat-ball were played against a high wall on the premises, but there was no regular ball-place built for the purpose. Birds were caught with nets and roasted by the boys at their own fire.

One institution quite peculiar to Oscott, and dating from about 1820, was that of 'the Public Man.' He filled a position very like that of the 'Captain' of other schools, and managed all the games. Every boy paid him a tax of half a crown a year for this purpose. A

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great many well-known men filled this office in their time.

The dress at Oscott in the early days was as follows: "Blue cutaway coats with brass buttons, drab breeches with a very broad flap, light-coloured waistcoats, broad shirt collars, with frills falling over the collars of the coat." To make the college popular in Birmingham, the boys wore steel shoe-buckles manufactured there.



## CHAPTER X

### THE JESUIT TRADITION

#### STONYHURST COLLEGE

WE left the fugitives from Liege just landed at Harwich. They had lost nearly all they possessed in their flight from their old home. Most fortunately they were not homeless now in England. The loyalty of one of their old pupils, Mr Weld of Lulworth, who had been with them at Bruges, had come to the rescue, and he had offered them as an asylum his Lancashire mansion and estate of Stonyhurst Hall. Thither it was, therefore, that the fugitives now directed their steps. They went first to Hull, and then by water across to Skipton, finally completing the journey by walking from thence to Clitheroe, a distance of some eighteen miles. By this time the younger ones among the boys, who were only in the lowest classes of the school, and perhaps not more than ten years of age, were so exhausted that they sat down on every doorstep as they went. They must have roused a certain amount of astonishment, for they were still dressed in the Liege uniform, a grey coat, yellow leather breeches, and black stockings, and many must have wondered who they were and whither they were going. Mr Kemper, for thus it was that the priests were designated during the time of the suppression of the Society, was in charge, and with him were four juniors or scholastics, and twelve scholars, of which last the leader

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was a boy called Clifford, of the Devonshire family  
of the name.

### STONYHURST HALL

Stonyhurst Hall, as the little band then found it, was a large and ancient house, but in a terrible state of dilapidation, for it had not been inhabited for forty years. Without most extensive repairs and alterations, it was, indeed, quite uninhabitable. Only slowly and by degrees—for money was very scarce with them at that time in consequence of the great losses suffered at Liege—was the mansion made possible for the new use to which it was to be put.

The earliest extant deed concerning 'the Stanihurst' dates from the reign of John: the first mention of a house is 1373, when John Bayley was licensed to have an oratory at Stonyhurst. His house stood somewhere where the stables are now. The existing magnificent Elizabethan mansion, though never finished and left a fragment, was built by Sir Nicholas Shireburn, a great county magnate who had kept the old religion, at the very end of the sixteenth century. The architect was one Holt, who is probably the same as the architect of Wadham College a few years later. The four orders of architecture which decorate the main entrance also occur at Wadham. The chapel of Sir Nicholas's house, concealed, doubtless, because of the dangers of penal times, seems to have been situated to the right of the main gateway. One is tempted to believe that this must also be the site of the earlier Catholic oratory of the older house, which in that case would have stood detached from the residence and at some distance. The ground for so thinking is the existence of what is apparently the east window, another window to the north, and a very fine arch, of the size of the chancel arch of

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a church. All three of these are certainly older than 1592, and seem to belong to an earlier building. If so, the room which is now known as 'the Bayley Room' will have served successively as the chancel of the original oratory (and perhaps the only part ever completed), as the concealed chapel of the Catholic Shireburns, and as the original chapel for the school when the Jesuits first came there. A third pointed window is a later insertion, and was once the east window of the oratory at Bayley Hall, another property belonging to the same family. There is a secret means of egress from the room to a priest's hiding-place in the central tower, just behind the coat-of-arms over the gateway. It is a pity that it is now only a schoolroom. This great house contained several other notable rooms, especially the Great Hall, which is now the boys' refectory, the so-called Long Room on the first floor, and the Great Drawing-Room.

The Hall had been a great centre for fugitives, both Catholic and, at a later period, Jacobite, and it was well provided with hiding-places and other means of escape. The existence of no less than five hiding-places has been traced, and two still exist.

To realise exactly how much of the old buildings still survive, we must start at the porch in front and then go round by the Long Room to the end of the refectory, which, however, was then some twenty feet shorter than it is now. To the north of the towers there was nothing, and the north side of the court, where nowadays is the Arundell Library, was open on the left. To the right stood Sparrow's Hall, the residence of the agent of the Weld family, comprising some of the most ancient parts of the whole building. Apart from these quadrangle buildings, where the Prefect of Studies office formerly stood was a semi-detached pile known as the Duchess's



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Rooms, because they had been occupied and altered by that Mary, Duchess of Norfolk, the last of the ancient family of the Shireburns, who left the property at her death in 1754 to the Welds of Lulworth. The house had never been occupied since her time, for the Welds had never lived there.

### THE ADAPTATION OF THE OLD HOUSE

Such was the house in which the English Jesuits were henceforward to find their home. The whole had to be cleaned and repaired. Even after this had been done the accommodation was utterly insufficient. New floors were put in, dividing up the lofty rooms of the first floor into two storys, and somehow or other they all settled in. The room chosen for the chapel was on the ground floor, to the right of the entrance, of which we have already spoken. It is now known as 'the Bayley Room,' and used, as we have said, as a schoolroom.

To this chapel in the first early days the Catholics of the neighbourhood were admitted as well as the boys; but later on, in 1824, a barn was fitted up for them, and this in turn was superseded by the present church, which was built in 1835.

Mr Charles Wright, the procurator who carried out all these necessary changes and made the place possible to be used as a school for boys, was unfortunately a man without any pretensions whatever to artistic taste. He melted down a great number of leaden statues in the gardens, which if they had been preserved would now be of very high value, to get lead to repair the roof. The new buildings which he erected were far from beautiful. Perhaps we could hardly expect anything else at that period. But Mr Wright's structures shocked even the taste of the early nineteenth century. Some of them

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survive still, as, for instance, the building known as 'Shirk.' Another edifice which he put up to the north of the towers has fortunately been demolished, and has given place to the present parlour wing. When Mr Weld, the donor of the estate, first saw this product of Fr Wright's taste balancing the beautiful and ancient building of the other wing, he remarked, "Mr Wright must be a bold man, to set the criticism of the world thus at defiance."

The number of boys at the college grew fairly rapidly. There were fifty, three months after the opening, in 1794. Five years later, in 1799, there were ninety. In July 1803 this last number was almost doubled, and there were one hundred and seventy. Very considerable additions had to be made to the buildings and to the accommodations provided for the boys before this latter number could be much exceeded. These great changes were begun by Fr Nicholas Sewall in 1808.

To gain space for properly designed school premises, which of course the old buildings, planned as they were for quite a different purpose, could never have supplied, the whole range known as 'the Duchess's Rooms' were swept away altogether, and also the east pavilion of the old mansion, which had contained the Great Drawing-Room. In the place of these structures there grew up, on the site that is now known as the old playground front, everything that is necessary for a boy's school—study-place, classrooms, playrooms, dormitories, and academy-rooms. The old Elizabethan Hall still served as the refectory, and the boys' chapel still remained in the Bayley Room. In the central portion of the new building there were four floors, the 'priests' gallery' being on the first floor, and the 'masters' gallery' on the second. In the wings there were only three floors. The top floor along the whole

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length was devoted to dormitories, the study-place and the academy-room occupied the first floor of the two wings, and schoolrooms and playrooms the whole of the ground floor.

It is difficult nowadays to reconstruct in imagination these buildings, which for half a century were the ones in which the life of the school was carried on, until they were superseded by the present ones in 1876. All the levels of the playgrounds in front have been changed. The building stood further back than at present, and there were trees and flowers immediately in front. The playgrounds were not very different from the present ones. The Higher Line playground was on the left, and the Lower Line for the younger boys on the right, as one came out of the house. This rather curious nomenclature of the two playgrounds, which still continues, is a legacy from St Omers, where the playground, for some unexplained reason, was always known as 'the Line.'

Between the Lines ran the Prefect's Walk, a little above the level of the ground to right and left of it, so as to give the prefects a good view of all that was going on in each of the two playgrounds. At its extremity, towards the house, stood the 'Hand-ball,' one of those curious erections which each of our Catholic schools brought from France, and which still remain to several and serve for a distinctive game, unknown in any Protestant school. The 'penance walk' ran down the side of the greens.

The new buildings soon brought a rapid increase in the number of boys. Already in 1813 we hear, on the authority of Father John Weld, who was then rector, that the number of students was more than two hundred and fifty. This number must have included not only the boys and philosophers but also the Jesuit scholastics,



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for, apart from these, the number of two hundred and fifty was never reached till a very much later period. A list of 1815, which has been preserved, gives us the following: "Philosophy, 1; Rhetoric, 12; Poetry, 27; Syntax, 35; Grammar, 37; Rudiments, 36; Little Figures, 66. Total, 214."

Up to this time the one single house had been obliged to serve all the various purposes of the great central institution of the Society, of which the school was only a single department. Some of the very smallest boys had, indeed, by 1815 been sent off to Hodder—the present preparatory school for Stonyhurst, about a mile away—which had been also given by Mr Weld, and was at first utilised as the novitiate for the Society, but all the other needs were still provided for in Stonyhurst itself. Besides the school itself of some two hundred boys, there was the small band of 'Philosophers,' lay boys of eighteen to twenty-one, who lived under a laxer discipline than the school and were engaged on work more or less of a university standard; and, further, the 'Juniorate' of young Jesuits doing their theological preparation for the priesthood. The next work that was undertaken was to make separate provision for these last by building them a seminary for themselves, and St Mary's Hall was accordingly erected for this purpose in 1830. As yet only the centre block of the present building was erected, and it contained some forty rooms.

In 1832-36 was built the college church, the architect being Mr J. J. Scoles. It was built in imitation of King's College Chapel at Cambridge, though naturally on a much smaller and less magnificent scale. This church was not then used by the boys, who have always had a chapel of their own, but only by the domestics and the Catholic residents of the neighbourhood.

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In 1837 was made the great bequest of books by Everard, tenth Lord Arundell of Wardour, which now forms the Arundell Library. In 1838 the observatory was built in the middle of the gardens. In 1841 was built the new infirmary, and in 1843 the hideous building already spoken of, which had been erected by Father Wright in 1799, was taken down and gave place to the present library wing. Then, lastly, in 1848 a new centre was established at St Beuno's in Wales for those studying theology, and St Mary's Hall became the property of those Juniors who were studying philosophy in preparation for the Society.

So far, for a long period of forty years, almost nothing had been done for the improvement of the actual school buildings. These were taken in hand again in 1850. The first step was to provide an outdoors swimming-basin, but it soon had to be abandoned because of the icy temperature of the water. New 'washing-places' were next provided inside the house. Up to this time there had been no advance upon the ideas of the Middle Ages upon the subject. The old 'washing place' was a large flagged room with a row of taps round it. All washing had to be done in cold water as it fell from the taps, and the dirty water was carried off by an open drain. Each boy brought his own toilet necessities from the upper floor, for no accommodation was available in the 'washing place' itself. The only towels were a number of jack-towels in the centre of the room. Under the new system, though washing was still done from the taps, each boy had his own receptacle for brush and comb and other things he needed, and his own towel. Baths were not usually provided at all at this period at schools, but Stonyhurst had just a few, and most boys got one once a month. This old washing

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place, transformed, is now the 'do place,' the scene of many festivities.

Another great improvement about 1850 was the building of the ambulatory, or covered playground, for wet weather. The damp and cold climate of Lancashire rendered this a particularly valuable institution. In 1856 the work was undertaken of completing the front court in its original style. For this purpose 'Sparrow Hall' was demolished, and that block was built which is now standing to the north of the quadrangle. It comprised at that time the Community and Philosophers' refectories, the Arundell Library, and the domestic chapel, with private rooms above. At the same time the refectory was lengthened by twenty feet, and the minstrel gallery was built with some of the relics of the older buildings. Now for the first time the original design of the whole quadrangle was realised.

One more great period of construction must be noted before we leave this part of the subject. The great work of the 'playground front' erected in 1810 was by this time inadequate to the claims made upon it. Accordingly it was determined in 1876 to rebuild the whole, a truly stupendous task. The front of the new building was planned some feet in front of the old, so that work could be carried on all the time as if nothing was happening. The first part erected, too, stood beyond and clear of the old, so it was finished and available for temporary use before any part of the old was destroyed. Thus, bit by bit, as each portion of the old was destroyed there was always a corresponding bit of the new available to be used by those among the boys who were displaced. The whole work took thirteen years to carry through, and with its accomplishment in 1889 the existing college of Stonyhurst at length acquired its present and presumably final



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form. The old 'playground front' had been 300 feet in length, in three equal portions. The new is altogether no less than 830 feet, the centre portion alone occupying almost as much space as the whole of the older building. No school in England has a more imposing frontage than Stonyhurst now possesses, and, it may be added, few have more interesting relics of the past among their buildings than Stonyhurst has in its ancient Shireburn Towers, and the front which once belonged to the old 'Stonyhurst Hall.'

### LIFE AT STONYHURST

There may be seen in that very rare little periodical, the *Catholic Directory* for 1797, the original prospectus put forth by 'the Gentlemen from Liege,' as the Jesuits, still under the suppression, then called themselves. It is so interesting that we give some extracts:

"STONYHURST COLLEGE, near BLACKBURN, LANCA-SHIRE.—The Rev. Mr Stone, President.—1. The annual pension of this establishment is FORTY GUINEAS, but, for children under twelve years of age, only THIRTY-SEVEN GUINEAS will be required. . . . The Pension is to be paid HALF YEARLY IN ADVANCE. A deduction of eight guineas per annum will be allowed to those parents who, living in the vicinity, may choose to charge themselves with the detail of clothing their children. . . .

"The Sunday or holyday dress is uniform, and consists of a plain coat of superfine blue cloth, with yellow buttons, red cloth or kerseymere waistcoats. Every scholar shall bring with him this dress, besides a suit for daily wear, six shirts, six handkerchiefs, six pair of stockings and three pair of shoes. Any deficiency in the above will be charged to the parents. . . .

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“The scholars are taught Latin, Greek, and all the branches of classical education, sacred and profane History, Geography, Arithmetic; and when sufficiently advanced, Algebra and Geometry, with all the other parts of the Mathematics in the respective classes. Particular care is taken that they learn to read well and write a good hand and that they speak and write French with accuracy.

“Four times a year the scholars are called to a public examination of what they have been taught. Those who have made extraordinary progress are honoured and rewarded. The idle for punishment are confined in the vacation to certain extraordinary hours of study during playtime, in order to repair what they have neglected to learn in school; and, therefore, if they are found defective in the last and most important examen of the year, before the long vacation, parents will be requested not to summon them home at that time.

“The age of admission is from eight to fourteen years. . . . The greatest care is taken to instruct the children in the duties of RELIGION and MORALITY; and they are constantly under the eye of one or more of the directors, who see that those duties are practised and that the rules of civility are not violated.

“. . . No allowance is made for absence during the vacation which begins on the FIFTEENTH OF AUGUST and ends on the FIFTEENTH OF SEPTEMBER. . . . It is, indeed, the most serious and earnest desire of the directors that the children should never be called home during the course of their education, as they have found by experience that such avocations have often proved prejudicial not only to study and application but even to content and happiness. . . .

“The college is a large building capable of lodging

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one hundred and fifty persons conveniently. The garden and court adjoining, where the young gentlemen play, are very airy and spacious."

Such was ancient Stonyhurst. It remains to give an account of the life and course of studies actually in vogue to-day.

#### RELIGIOUS TRAINING AT STONYHURST

The year at Stonyhurst begins with a three-day retreat attended by all the older boys. The public recital of morning prayers in the study-place is followed by daily attendance at Mass. A certain portion of the boys go daily to Holy Communion. Facilities for confession are given every Saturday and before any great feast. In the evening there is a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, when the Rosary is generally said, and evening prayers in chapel close the day.

There are two Sodalities, both of long standing. The first is the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, as in all Jesuit schools, and was originally established at St Omers in 1609. This is confined to the three higher classes. The obligations consist chiefly in the recitation of the Office of our Lady in the Sodality Chapel on Saturday night or Sunday morning.

The Sodality of the Angels is the corresponding institution for the boys of the lower classes. It serves as a kind of preliminary introduction to the senior Sodality.

#### DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENTS IN JESUIT SCHOOLS

Although there is not the same uniformity nowadays in all the schools of the Society of Jesus which existed



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in the earliest years after the drawing up of the *Ratio Studiorum*, the system is still more or less the same in all, though admitting of a certain amount of variation to suit the needs of different countries and of various classes of society. The system is designed as an attempt to carry on at school the kind of supervision that a conscientious parent feels bound to exercise over the life and conduct of his children at home. Accordingly, certain officials called Prefects are always with the boys in playroom and playground and field, whose presence secures that training in orderliness, self-control, and obedience to law that is a chief end in education. A good deal depends, of course, upon the way in which the system is worked. In certain schools on the Continent it may fairly be contended that this supervision has been unduly detailed, and that there has not been in consequence enough room left for the independent development of character on the part of the boy. However it may have worked in past years, when the general allowance of liberty, except in a few great schools like Eton, was much less than at present, many would feel that the discipline of supervision as carried out at Stonyhurst forty years ago would be undesirable now. But the members of the Society of Jesus have never been slow to recognise the need for change when the time comes. There has been not so much change in the actual system of rules observed, as a very great change in the method by which these rules are applied. Anyone who knows the Stonyhurst boys at the universities—and the present writer has, he supposes, a more intimate and longer experience in this matter than anyone else now living—knows that the system as now applied does not interfere with the proper development of character, while it does almost absolutely avoid and prevent all the evils which are to be found in the great

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Public Schools where no such system of supervision is in force. Stonyhurst men of late years in Oxford and Cambridge have held a record second to none.

For minor offences the usual punishment used to be the 'penance walk,' by which a boy was made to walk up and down a certain part of the playground for an hour or more in silence during the time of play. But nowadays penance-drill has taken the place of the older punishment. Corporal punishment is inflicted on the hand with an instrument made of gutta-percha, which is known to the boys as the 'tolly,' to the masters as the 'ferula.' 'Twice nine,' that is, nine on each hand, is the maximum that can be given. Any master can order the punishment, but only the Prefect administers it. A criticism might no doubt be made that individual masters, often young and inexperienced, cannot always be trusted to order punishments of this kind indiscriminately and without very definite rights of appeal being given to the boy. But the matter is very much in the hands of the Prefect, and that should be ample protection against any possible abuse.

### 'PREFECTS' AND 'HOUSE SYSTEM'

As regards the boys themselves, there is a 'Committee' of seven elected every year by the outgoing Committee. Two 'Heads' are appointed by the Prefect, generally, if not always, taken from these seven, and known as First Head and Second Head. These occupy the position and exercise the authority which is generally associated with the term 'Prefect' at other schools, and enjoy certain privileges in consequence.

For play purposes the school is divided into four divisions according to age, 'Higher Line,' 'Lower Line,' 'Third' and 'Fourth Playrooms.' These have their

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separate playrooms and libraries indoors and separate playgrounds and fields. But at the same time, for the purpose of providing the stimulus of competition, which clearly cannot be given by any system which divides boys by age, there is a second division, vertical, so to speak, instead of horizontal, by which the school is again divided up into 'Lines.' The 'Lines' in this application of the word more or less correspond with what are called 'Houses' in other schools. There are four of these, 'Campion,' 'Shireburn,' 'St Omers,' and 'Weld,' and matches are played between them for challenge cups every year.

### GAMES AT STONYHURST

The great isolation in which Stonyhurst began its career, while penal laws were still not wholly repealed and Catholics lived a life apart in many ways from that of their fellow-countrymen, led naturally at first to a great distinction between the games played at the school and those which were more or less universal elsewhere in England. Stonyhurst had brought a long tradition of games from the Continent which had developed on different lines from ordinary English games. Now, after a hundred years, these differences have disappeared and cricket and Rugby football reign supreme; but at first it was not so. Cricket as played at Stonyhurst, though equally a descendant of sixteenth-century cricket, was not the cricket we know; football, too, was played according to special rules. That, however, was the case with almost every English school up to the seventies, when the general uniformity of Association and Rugby Union began to assert themselves.

Stonyhurst cricket, played exclusively up to 1860,



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was a single-wicket game played with a bat of peculiar shape. The ball was generally home-made, with a raised belt at the seams. Slogging was invariable, and bowling was always under arm and along the ground. The pitch was thirty yards and the wicket was a stone, like a small milestone. 'There and back' constituted a run. Each batsman was allowed a maximum of twenty-one balls, after which the innings lapsed. If he was bowled, caught, or stumped before that, he was out.<sup>1</sup> It was not till 1886 that it was given up finally, though cricket as played elsewhere was introduced in 1860. The old 'cricket stones' which served for wickets may still be seen in the playground, and specimens of the bats and balls are preserved in the Stonyhurst Museum. It is interesting to note that a game almost identical was played at the Charterhouse while it was still in London, and called there 'Hockey sticks and four pennies.' Both games seem to be descendants of the original 'cricket' of Tudor times, probably much less changed than is the cricket with which we are now more familiar.

Stonyhurst football was played with a small ball and narrow goals. The number of players was unlimited. Each goal was in charge of a 'guarder,' and no one else might approach within eight yards of it except when the ball was there. Round this semicircle of eight yards were posted the defenders' 'second guarders,' and the attackers or 'poachers.' The remainder of the side were 'players up,' and followed the ball. The one outstanding point in which Stonyhurst football differed from that of almost all other schools was that 'boxing' was allowed, *i.e.* hitting the ball with the closed fist. This perhaps is due to French influence. As in the

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete account of the game see the *Stonyhurst Magazine*, vol. xi., pp. 83-86.

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old Charterhouse game, ends were changed after each goal, and the game lasted for an hour and a half.<sup>1</sup> In 1884 Association football was introduced, and gradually displaced the older game. But this, again, gave place to 'Rugby' about 1920, and 'Rugby' now reigns alone.

'Cat' was played at Stonyhurst, but never attained the same importance there as it did at Ushaw. There were a few peculiarities in the game as played at Stonyhurst, but they were unimportant.

Handball, played at all the Catholic schools with French traditions, had at Stonyhurst a peculiar form known as 'Second-bounce.' It was played against the handball wall, four on each side. The ball was served in the usual way so as to secure a long rebound from the wall. One of the other side stopped it in the air with his hand, and then on the second bounce (no one could be quick enough to do it on the first bounce) returned it against the wall. It was a slower game than ordinary 'handball,' but more graceful. Both forms of the game died out more or less as real games of skill after the introduction of 'London cricket' in 1860. At the present time matches are played against the M.C.C., Sedbergh, and Rossall, and at Rugby football against Sedbergh, Rossall, and Ampleforth. There is rather a difficulty in obtaining good out-matches, because there are not many public schools within reasonable distance in the North. All the members of the Higher Line belong to the O.T.C., and there is physical training every day. At the annual Public School Camps which take place in the summer, Stonyhurst has been very successful in recent years, carrying

<sup>1</sup> For rules of Stonyhurst football see the *Stonyhurst Magazine*, vol. ii., p. 195. For a vivid description see Mr Percy Fitzgerald's *Schooldays at Saxonhurst*, pp. 65-7.

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off the sports cup at Tidworth twice out of the last four years. There is a very good miniature range for practice in shooting.

Among the Juniors there is a preparatory corps carried on more or less on 'Scout' lines, to which boys belong before they are old enough to be enrolled in the O.T.C.

A few distinctive Stonyhurst terms may be noted as worthy of interest. Chief among these is the word 'Blandyke,' which expresses the monthly holidays. It is derived from a farm near St Omers to which the boys went out on these holidays for play. 'Good-day' is another term in use for occasional holidays. 'Lemonade-days' derived their name presumably from the simple treat allowed in St Omers days. Nowadays there is no lemonade, but the term denotes an extra good dinner and cakes. The more general term in use now for festivities of this sort is simply 'a do.' 'Academies' are Exhibitions of the nature of Speech-days. They played a great part in old Stonyhurst life. They took place each term in the Academy Room. There was generally some music in set pieces, followed by 'speeches' in Greek, Latin, and French, and ending as a rule with a scene from Shakespeare. In the lower classes there was a corresponding ceremony known as a 'Concertatio,' when picked boys from each class contested in pairs against each other in the work they had done, Romans *v.* Carthaginians, the names of the victors being read out at the end.

## THE PHILOSOPHERS

The idea of the institution known as 'the Philosophers' at Stonyhurst was to supply, in days when the universities were not open to Catholics, something of



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the nature of a university course for older boys. They formed a community entirely distinct from the school, occupied their own rooms, public and private, and had their own staff. They had a considerable amount of liberty, might keep dogs and horses, shoot over the college preserves, and so forth. Nowadays the need for them no longer exists, for those who formerly remained on as Philosophers now go to the universities, and there have been none admitted for several years past.

### THE THEATRE

One adjunct to education which has always taken a prominent place in Jesuit colleges is the theatre. Latin and French dramas were acted at St Omers, and at Liege, too, we have records of the same sort of thing, acted with some elaborate care in the presence of the Prince-Bishop and other notabilities. At Stonyhurst they have been constant from the beginning, but on a lower scale of dramatic severity. Thus as early as 1809 the boys were acting such farces as *High Life below Stairs* and *The Village Lawyer*, neither of which would have been tolerated for a moment at St Omers. But Shakespeare always was the main source upon which they drew. Up till 1872, before which time, incredible as it now seems, boys were not accustomed to go home for the Christmas holidays, a Shakespeare play was always, or almost always, chosen for the Christmas festivities at school. The plays had to be adapted (one would imagine a difficult task, but boys are not critical except of novelty), for no female character was ever allowed to appear. It must have been a formidable task to provide for these entertainments for the Christmas holidays, for public opinion was strong that there must be a performance for every night

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between Boxing Day and Twelfth Day. 'The Comedy' held the stage for two nights, and then for two nights more 'The Tragedy.' The remaining nights were given up to farces, and generally a home-made comic opera. Probably at few English schools has the drama held so important a position as part of the curriculum as it did at Stonyhurst in the middle of the last century. At the present time Shrove Tuesday is the occasion on which the play is generally produced.

### RELICS AND TREASURES AT STONYHURST

Any stranger making his first visit to Stonyhurst, and being shown the college treasures, will certainly be surprised at their number and value. We will take the sacristy first. There the greatest treasures are two relics of the Passion—one of the thorns from the Crown of Thorns, and a large relic of the Holy Cross.

The Holy Thorn is of special interest. It belonged originally to Mary Queen of Scots, and doubtless comes from the crown preserved at the Sainte Chapelle, which now has not a single thorn remaining. Queen Mary gave it to Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and eventually it came to Father John Gerard and was sent to St Omers. After various vicissitudes during the period of the troubles, it came at last to Stonyhurst in 1803.

The relic of the True Cross was originally part of the greater relic "of the stumpe of the Crosse of our Saviour" which was kept in the Tower of London among the Crown jewels. Its detailed history was written by Father John Morris in the *Month* of March and April 1802.

The relics of Blessed Thomas More are very remark-

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able. Stonyhurst possesses his hat and skull-cap, as well as a gold crucifix and a jewel known as 'the George,' which belonged to him. There is also a silver seal with the arms of More, and a Moor's head for crest, and a shell pouncet-box.

Among the relics of the English martyrs we may note 'Blessed Campion's cord,' by which he was bound, and the Corporal used for saying Mass in the Tower by five confessors of the Faith, whose names are worked upon it.

Among the collection of church plate the most noteworthy pieces are the 'Prior Park Monstrance,' so called because it was bought at the Prior Park sale in 1856, which stood originally 4 feet 8 inches in height and weighs half a hundredweight; and the 'Liege Monstrance,' which is smaller but much more beautiful. It is called the Liege Monstrance, but its history goes back beyond Liege, for it was presented to St Omers about 1750, and is dated by a chronographic inscription under the base, in 1708.

The vestments are very notable. Nowhere else in England is there such a collection of old English embroidery. Among these must be noted:

1. *Henry VII Vestments*.—These came from the Abbey of Westminster, and form part of Henry's bequest to his chapel. They were taken by Henry VIII to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. The work is Italian, for they were made in Florence, and the set consists of a chasuble and a cope.

2. *The Red High Mass Vestment*.—This is of extraordinary interest as having traditionally been worked by Katharine of Aragon and her maids of honour "during her sorrow." Dr Oliver says that it once belonged to Canterbury Cathedral, and that it was given to St Omers by James II.



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There are quite a number of other interesting vestments, but these are the most important.

Passing on to the library and other rooms, the pictures are for the most part unimportant. There is a series of Stuart pictures, which once belonged to Cardinal Alberoni and were bought for Stonyhurst in 1834. These are of considerable historical value.

The principal treasures of the library itself are a 'First Folio' of Shakespeare's plays, and a very rare 'Missal' printed at Rouen, of which only five copies are known to be extant. Of more sentimental interest is the copy of the Hours of our Lady which belonged to Mary Queen of Scots and was held in her hand at her execution. It was apparently bound for Mary Tudor, Queen of England, in the year of whose death it was printed, for it has the Tudor rose and Mary's own pomegranate, as well as the name MARIA in letters scattered over the back. Possibly it was a present, at the very end of her life, from Mary Tudor to Mary Queen of Scots.

But by far the most important book which Stonyhurst possesses, much more valuable even than this copy of the *Horæ* or the 'First Folio,' is the manuscript known as *St Cuthbert's Gospel*, or, in other words, a Latin version of the Gospel of St John, found in the tomb of St Cuthbert when it was opened by Prior Turgot of Durham in 1105. It is unilluminated, but belongs to the seventh century, and is written on vellum, entirely in uncial letters. It belongs to the period of St Cuthbert's life, and, since we know it was the custom to bury some of their own work with the bodies of the monks, it may be that this volume was written by St Cuthbert's own hand. It belonged to Durham Monastery till the Dissolution, and then passed into the possession of the Lee family. One of this

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family became Lord Lichfield, and gave it to Father Thomas Phillipps, who in turn gave it to the college at Liege in 1679. The version of the Latin text differs from any other known in some particulars, and its readings are sometimes of importance.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE JESUIT TRADITION

#### BEAUMONT COLLEGE

FOR nearly seventy years Stonyhurst remained not only the chief but the only Jesuit educational establishment of importance in England. But by that time the need of additional Catholic educational facilities for the South was making itself felt. The North was well provided for by Stonyhurst, Ushaw, and Ampleforth; the Midlands had Oscott; the West had Downside and Prior Park; but within one hundred miles of London in any direction there was nothing but the one school and seminary at St Edmund's, Old Hall, and that only provided, in 1860, for less than a hundred boys. So the time seemed ripe for a new Jesuit school in the South, not too far from London.

In the year 1854 there had been purchased for the Society, under great secrecy, the fine property known as Beaumont Lodge, Old Windsor, to serve as a novitiate. The novitiate was moved in 1861 to its present home at Manresa, Roehampton, and it was decided to utilise Beaumont Lodge for the purpose of the new school. The house and property were of some historic interest, having been for some years the home of Warren Hastings, though the house had been rebuilt since his time. It stands on the banks of the Thames, actually adjoining Windsor Great Park, well above the river and out of all danger of floods, with extensive grounds rising



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up behind, levelled nowadays in terraces for playing-fields, and commanding from the highest part, known as 'The Beeches,' a very extensive prospect, with a fine view of Windsor Castle.

The 10th October 1861 saw the last of the novices depart. On the 28th of the same month, Charles Roskell, the first boy, was admitted, and Beaumont College became a living reality. The first rector was Father James Eccles. By the same date a year later the number had grown to fifty.

The first start of a new school is never very luxurious, and Beaumont formed no exception to the general rule. The house was not well adapted for school purposes—no house not built for the purpose ever is—and the accommodation was insufficient. Chairs were so scarce that they had to be carried from one room to another. Fires were few, and central heating unknown. The boys took their meals with the community, and consequently in silence. The smaller boys had their meals in another room, but were not allowed to talk except in French.

In outward observance one Jesuit school is very like another all the world over. In each there are, no doubt, minute differences of rule and custom; each has its own spirit and tradition, and these differences, though to their own members they may make each school stand out distinctly from the rest, can scarcely be put on paper or explained to the general reader. The system of Stonyhurst was transferred to Beaumont more or less in its entirety. Later years have brought varying developments, which will be described, but Beaumont remains the child of Stonyhurst and the grandchild of St Omers, and the main outlines of organisation, of discipline, have been the same throughout.

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The original 'Old House,' though it still forms the principal and centre portion of the buildings, was of course in itself quite inadequate for the needs of a large and growing school. New wings had to be built, and the first was added in 1863, which allowed the number of boys to be increased in 1865 to the full hundred. The foundation-stone of the new church was laid in 1865 by Dr Grant, the Bishop of Southwark. Father Eccles, who was then rector, had planned a much more ambitious building than was eventually erected, and it had to be reduced in scale. It was opened under the rectorship of Father Clough in 1870, and, it must be admitted, is more remarkable for its usefulness than for any architectural beauty. The plainness of the structure is, however, very successfully relieved by the interior decoration, the work of Mr Romaine Walker, in a style which he himself designated as "the grandchild of the Pompeian." The reredos, given by the 'Beaumont Union' of Old Boys, was designed by Bentley: it contains five panels by Westlake, our Divine Lord in the centre, our Lady and St Aloysius on the Gospel side, St Joseph and St Stanislaus on the Epistle side. The six candlesticks, also designed by Bentley, were given by General Guzman Blanco, President of Venezuela, in memory of his son, who died in Paris while still a Beaumont boy.

The other buildings of the college, though eminently useful and practical, are not notable for architecture. They have grown up as they have been needed to fill actual requirements, and so there is not much to say about them. The swimming-bath was added in 1881. A few years before that Father Welsby had built a second wing to the college, that containing the Higher Line playroom. He also converted the old 'White House' into a preparatory school, where the smallest

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boys lived entirely separate from the rest of the college. This was the forerunner of the present St John's.

Probably, however, the addition to the buildings which has made the greatest difference to the life of the school has been the provision of the large sports hall, which was built in commemoration of the first fifty years of the college at the jubilee of 1911. It was partly the gift of old boys and friends, and partly built by the college, and its purpose is to provide a covered playground for use in bad weather. The hall is 174 feet long and 84 feet wide, covered in by a single span of roof, with aisles on each side, this being made possible by an elaborate system of girders. The value to the school of such a hall can scarcely be exaggerated in our changeable English climate.

There is good accommodation for sick boys under the care of the matron. More serious cases are dealt with at the Princess Christian Nursing Home or at the King Edward's Hospital at Windsor.

## ST JOHN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The first preparatory school in connection with Beaumont was carried on in the 'White House,' a medium-sized residence belonging to the property. But in 1887 Father O'Hare determined to set about the building of a school more suited for the purpose, and was fortunate in securing the services of Mr John Bentley as his architect. The site is a magnificent one, on the higher ground above the college, and the greatest advantage has been taken of its possibilities. It must be one of the most beautiful school-houses in all England, so beautiful that one is tempted to think that it is wasted on small boys, who are never critical of their school's architecture. The whole structure



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is carefully planned and full of surprises in the way of beautiful carving, mosaic floors, and stained-glass oriel windows. The general style is more or less Tudor, with a chapel of Perpendicular Gothic of the fifteenth century.

Oddly enough, although they are in the same grounds, the college and St John's (the latter is dedicated to St John Berchmans, by the way, and not to the Evangelist or the Baptist) stand in different counties and different dioceses. The college is in Berkshire and Portsmouth diocese, St John's in Surrey and Southwark. The 'county ditch,' which divides the two counties and dioceses, runs through the grounds.

### DISCIPLINE

From the first the desire at Beaumont has been to provide a school which would give Catholics all that is good in the Public School life of England. For English needs in the middle of the nineteenth century it was felt that the unmodified Jesuit system, marvellously as that had provided for the wants of all Europe in the sixteenth and following centuries, no longer quite filled the bill. The Jesuit system has the faults of its virtues. That same wonderful unity which enabled the Society to dominate all the education of Catholic Europe in former years, now was to some extent a hindrance. Just because they are an international Order, under a single head, and inspired by a single purpose, it is more difficult for them to vary their action for special circumstances than it is for those less highly organised. Yet the nineteenth century was not the sixteenth, and English, and still more Irish, boys, who develop much more slowly than Italian and Spanish, do not necessarily flourish most under a régime which may

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be ideal for Southerners. The modern parent, too, especially if he be a convert who was educated at a Protestant Public School, is apt to be blind to the unfamiliar merits of a traditional Catholic system, and to press for approximation to the ideals which are the only ones he understands. So the problem before the Society of Jesus in these latter years in England has been how best to make the changes which seemed desirable, while at the same time they preserved intact the essentials of their own system, in many ways the greatest educational system that the world has ever known.

From the first at Beaumont there have been attempts to attain this end. The old Catholic names for the classes, for instance, still retained at Stonyhurst and elsewhere, have been given up at Beaumont in favour of the more usual nomenclature of fourth, fifth, and sixth forms, as used, also from Catholic days, in the great neighbouring school of Eton. Considerable changes were made in 1891 by Father William Heathcote. Himself of an ancient Hampshire family and later the baronet of the name, he was a good judge of what was desired for boys of the class that Beaumont wanted to attract, and his reforms all went to enlarge the liberty of the boys.

It was, however, to Father Joseph Bampton, who became rector in 1901, that the principal changes in Beaumont discipline are due. He realised that such changes were necessary, however little they were relished by conservative minds to whom past methods had become sacred; and carried them out with much courage and energy. Chief among them was the initiation of a system of studies in connection with the Higher and Lower Certificate Examinations which led on directly to Oxford and Cambridge, to which

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universities by this time a number of Beaumont boys were going. New physical and chemical laboratories were built in conformity with the requirements of the War Office, and Beaumont, entering the Conference of Headmasters, received due recognition as a Public School.

Another change of great importance for the formation of the character of the boys was the institution of a prefect system among the boys on the model of that common in our old English Catholic schools, such as has been described in our chapter on Catholic Winchester, and which of late years has been, somewhat unreasonably, chiefly connected with the name of Dr Arnold of Rugby. But as the name of 'prefect' was in the Jesuit system already appropriated to certain of the priests, the title of 'captain,' as used in the houses of Eton, was chosen instead.

The introduction of such a system to an existing school that has not been used to it, is always a matter of some difficulty. It is easy to write out a constitution, but it takes time to create a tradition, and it is on tradition and not on any written constitution that the practical working of a school always depends. It took some years, therefore, before the new system was fully digested, and the authorities of the school had to feel their way slowly before it was entirely successful.

As finally developed, the system now in use at Beaumont is as follows: The 'Lower Line,' or Junior School, remains under the usual Jesuit plan of constant supervision by priest prefects, though there are captains in each of the Lower-Line playrooms who do a great deal of good work in the management of games and in keeping order on their own account. But the Higher Line or Upper School is almost entirely looked after by the captains and vice-captains. There are usually either



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three or four captains, and the same number of vice-captains, who are selected by the rector, and are not necessarily the seven or eight top boys of the sixth form. They enjoy certain privileges and have certain fairly onerous duties. Among their chief privileges are the use of the captains' room, in which they have tea every day, and smoking on certain days of the week at specified hours; their immunity from ordinary school punishments, and their very real power over the other boys. Their duties are to keep order in the study, dormitories, or private room of the bigger boys and in the play-rooms; to deal with cases of unpunctuality and other lesser offences; and to take out parties of boys from four to eight in number for walks or bicycle-rides in any direction. They are on their honour to observe the rules themselves and to see that they are observed by others. Discipline is maintained, and boys are dealt with, without reference to the school authorities, with the proviso that no corporal punishment is inflicted without the rector being informed. In all cases of this sort, too, an appeal lies to the rector if any boy thinks he is being unjustly treated; but appeals, in practice, have been extraordinarily rare. Sufficient time has now passed to establish a tradition, and the system has proved its value, and has, no doubt, come to stay.

## GAMES AND SPORTS

When Beaumont was first founded in 1861, they played the old game of football that had been customary at Stonyhurst, and which we have already described. 'Stonyhurst cricket,' however, never made good its footing, and 'London cricket' was played from the first, although in the earlier years the habit of constant slogging which was inherited from the old game was

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very marked. Gradually, however, that passed away, and cricket has flourished on normal lines ever since. In the same way, the difficulty of getting matches led to the demise of the old football game; 'Association' rules being introduced in its place from 1881 onwards. The last game under the old rules was played in 1893. Association in its turn gave place to Rugby Union rules in 1917.

From 1896 onwards various matches were played under 'Soccer' rules with teams from Eton, where, although the old Eton 'Field' game still holds its own, 'Soccer' was played then, as Rugby is now, in the Lent term. It was in connection with these matches that Mr Shane Leslie tells a good story which it may be wished had some firmer foundation than his own fertile imagination. It is one of those stories that one could wish were true, though they are not. Beaumont, so Mr Leslie alleges, sent a challenge to Eton, and received this scornful reply from, one presumes, the reigning 'Keepers of the Field': "Winchester we know, and Harrow we know, but who are you?" To which Beaumont is alleged to have returned the apt reply: "We are what you once were, a school for Catholic gentlemen." But though the story is not true, and for Eton's sake one is glad it is not, these matches did take place, and were the beginning of a thoroughly good understanding between the two schools.

Situated as it is on the Thames, and with the example of Eton to spur them on, it is only natural that rowing should have become a recognised part of Beaumont life. Few schools are so situated as to be able to enjoy the sport to greater advantage.

In early days there were two boats, the *Wave* and the *Dot*, belonging to the school. Each boat was manned by four oars, and, besides, two boys could sit

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under the tiller ropes, three more on each side beside the rowers, and two in the bows. So twenty-eight altogether could be accommodated. Such boats were excellent for picnics and pleasure-parties, but obviously no use at all for teaching serious rowing. At a later date there was also a large galleon which carried some sixty boys across the river to bathe, and needed some ten or twelve rowers on each side, sitting side by side. It was too bulky to go far.

Serious rowing may be dated from 1895, when Father O'Fallon Pope and Father Edward Mayo formed the Boat Club. A small temporary boathouse was built opposite 'The Bells of Ouseley,' and this gave place in 1908 to one more adequate, when the B.B.C. took over the boathouse that had belonged to Cooper's Hill Engineering College. For some years not much progress was made, partly because of fears of the new sport interfering with the vested interests of cricket and football, and partly because no member of the resident staff was competent to act as coach. No more than a 'four' could be kept going, and the style of rowing was still elementary. Father Mayo, who had been away from 1899 to 1904, returned as Prefect in the latter year, and from that date rowing at Beaumont really dates as a serious sport.

In 1906 an Eight was put into training and, though still by no means fully instructed in the art of rowing, was entered for Molesey Regatta. In 1912 an entry was also made at the regatta at Staines, and a Four won the Captain's Cup at Molesey. Beaumont had shown that it could not merely row but could win races. Mr A. N. Pazolt was coach, then and up to 1923, when he was succeeded by Father Campbell, S.J.

In the following year, therefore, 1913, for the first time the great step was taken of entering an Eight for



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the Ladies' Plate at Henley. They were drawn against the winners, Trinity College, Oxford, but rowed well and showed good form. This ill-fortune has been theirs almost ever since. Again and again they have drawn the ultimate winners in the first heat, and, though always winning praise for their form and endurance, have seldom got into a second heat. For a school Eight to win the Ladies' Plate against crews from colleges averaging three or four years older than themselves, would be, except for Eton and possibly Shrewsbury, almost out of the question.

In 1914 a race was arranged between Beaumont and Eton's second Eight. This fixture has taken place ever since, and has always been productive of a first-rate race. Eton was always victorious up to 1923, but hardly ever by more than a full length. In 1924 and 1925, however, Beaumont succeeded in winning.

Swimming has always been well taught at Beaumont, the covered swimming-bath giving excellent opportunity. No boy is allowed to go on the river in a boat until he has 'passed,' just as at Eton, and in consequence no life has ever been lost on the river.

Beaumont has always been a great training-ground for the army. In the Boer War, in proportion to her numbers, Beaumont sent more of her sons to the front than did any other school in the country. It was only natural, therefore, that she should have been among the first Catholic schools to form a cadet corps in 1905, affiliated to the 3rd V.B. East Surrey Regiment. It was reconstituted in 1909 as a contingent of the O.T.C., with an establishment of one hundred and five. For shooting practice there is a miniature rifle-range at the college, and the Metropolitan rifle-

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range at Runnymede is within easy reach on half-holidays.

There is also one feature of athletic training at Beaumont which is unusual. Boys are not only taught to shoot, but also to ride. The training, moreover, is not confined to riding and jumping. The boys are taught to judge the points of a horse, to tell its age, and even how to shoe and harness it.

## THE THEATRE

As at Stonyhurst, the theatre plays a large part in Beaumont education. At first the theatre was in the study-place, with a stage improvised out of study-desks. Beards and whiskers were ingeniously and effectively manufactured from the horsehair stuffing of an old chair. The usual Jesuit tradition of no female character was preserved. When *Macbeth* was played in 1874, for instance, the part of Lady Macbeth was metamorphosed into that of Donald, Macbeth's brother, and was played by Herbert Lucas. In those days all the plays were acted by the boys then at the school. After the 'Beaumont Union,' or association of old Beaumont boys, had been formed, the idea took shape of utilising past talent as well as present, and in 1877 the first play was produced on these lines, being Sheridan's *The Rivals*, with Father Bernard Vaughan as stage-manager. By this time there was a permanent stage in the study-place. Ever since that date the Shrovetide plays have been produced by the 'Union,' with Father Bernard Vaughan for many years as stage-manager, and after him Frederick William Barff, who till his early death in 1900 was the principal actor and, later, stage-manager of these plays.

In 1907, for the first time, a Latin play was given,

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Terence's *Phormio* being the play chosen. By this time the 'Theatre' had assumed its present form, and the scenic arrangements were really satisfactory. Probably in no school in England, not even Stonyhurst, has the drama played so large a part as it has at Beaumont.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION

#### DOWNSIDE SCHOOL

JUST as one of their old pupils, Mr Weld of Lulworth, had come to the aid of the 'Gentlemen of Liege,' and had given them an asylum at Stonyhurst, so also was it with the monks of St Gregory's, Douay. Sir Edward Smythe of Acton Burnell and Wootton, who had been at their school about 1770-74, came forward with an offer of hospitality at his own house at Acton Burnell. Theirs was a very different problem from that which had faced the Jesuits. These latter, as we have seen, had fifty boys almost immediately after their opening, and a hundred and seventy within about eight years. Nothing short of the whole of a large mansion, entirely given over to them, could have met their needs, and this it was that the generosity of Mr Weld provided. But St Gregory's was a very much smaller affair. Even at Douay the numbers had shrunk to nine English boys, and the community to six, all of which latter were still in prison at Doullens, while the boys were scattered everywhere to their houses. It was, therefore, impossible for Sir Edward Smythe's offer, which was made before the final crash came, to be at once made use of, and it was not till the imprisonment of the monks came to an end, on 2nd March 1795, that they were able to turn it to practical advantage.

Meanwhile the monks of St Lawrence, Dieuleward,

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who had likewise been turned out of their monastery, had heard of Sir Edward's generous offer, and had obtained leave to avail themselves of it as a temporary measure, until such time as the monks of St Gregory could come. When, therefore, Prior Sharrock and his five companions arrived, they found these other monks already there, living in community under Prior Marsh of Dieuleward, and including in their number three who belonged to St Gregory's but had got back to England in time to avoid imprisonment. There were twelve in residence before, now there were eighteen altogether; two separate communities under two priors. The position was impossible, and was speedily brought to an end by the withdrawal of the community of St Lawrence to find a new home at Brindle, in Lancashire, and later at Ampleforth. It seemed to them at the time a grievance that they should have to go; it was really to their ultimate advantage, for it forced them to find a house of their own, and enabled them to get settled in it some years before their brother monks of St Gregory's were able in their turn to take the same necessary step.

Sir Edward Smythe, it must be remembered, had not handed over the house at Acton Burnell, as Mr Weld had done with his at Stonyhurst. What he had done was to offer temporary hospitality, to be prolonged if necessary for many years, though he could not bind his successors; and although he built a new wing and a chapel for his guests' accommodation, he occupied the house himself, at least occasionally, and did not part with any of his freehold. It was obvious, therefore, that his kindness offered no opportunity for any final settlement of the future of St Gregory's. His generosity was extreme, in some ways greater even than that of Mr Weld—for it is a greater thing, perhaps, to

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entertain a community and a school of boys as inmates of one's own house than to present to them an estate and mansion which no one has lived in for forty years—and yet it may be doubted whether in the long run it was for the advantage of St Gregory's that he should ever have allowed them to stay at Acton Burnell for more than a very few months or years.

As we read the account of the twenty years during which the community and school were housed at Acton Burnell, we are impressed only with the uncertainty of the position, and the unhopefulness of the future outlook. They were all longing to get back to Douay; but England was at war with France, and their old monastery was falling into ruins. There was no hope of building up either school or monastery where they were, and no energy to move elsewhere in order to make a real start. Three years after the beginning, the school still consisted only of 'six little boys.' Prior Sharrock, building castles in the air and indulging in what seemed to him 'a very favourable supposition,' did not venture to dream that they could ever, even if St Gregory's and St Lawrence's united and formed themselves into a single community, get more than 'fifty scholars at £30.' "We will never have it," he says, "but I will suppose the case." In 1798 the pension was £25, and there were, as we have seen, 'six little boys.' The fee was raised to £30 in 1808, and to forty guineas in 1812, largely, no doubt, to the higher cost of living caused by the wars. The number rose to seventeen in 1803, and there were even hopes of nineteen, but it does not seem that it ever reached the full score, as long as the school remained at Acton Burnell.

In 1811, however, an event occurred which, though it seemed at the time a terrible disaster, was really a



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blessing in disguise to the community, namely, the death of their generous benefactor. The new baronet, only lately married, desired the freedom of his own house, and the monks were faced with the necessity of a move. But a suitable house was not easy to find. One after another was inspected only to be rejected, and month succeeded month of futile search, so that it was not till more than two years had passed, in September 1813, that the final choice was made by Prior Kendal, who had succeeded Prior Sharrock in 1808. He had chosen a mansion-house in Somerset, with twenty-one acres of land, some five miles from the coal-pits of Radstock, and within a mile of the main road from London to Plymouth. "It is eleven miles from Bath," he writes, "and the name of the place Downside." "Though I should seek out England itself," he writes again a few weeks later, "I could not have purchased a more delightful and eligible situation."

Alas! poor Prior Kendal, though, like Moses, he had viewed the promised land, was not to lead his brethren in. Just as all arrangements were being made for the move, he fell ill, and died at Wootton Hall, the home of the dowager Lady Smythe, on 26th April 1814.

The twenty-one acres originally planned were increased to sixty-six, and the total price paid was £7338. For that sum he had provided for his community a fine manor-house with nine or ten bedrooms, capable of being divided, and so making nineteen. Prior Kendal thought that a further expenditure of, say, £400, to provide "an outward building dormitory, calefactory, &c., for the boys," would give them all they needed. It was never built, and the original purchase was destined to be practically the sole accommodation available for monastery and school together for the next ten years.

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## MOUNT PLEASANT, DOWNSIDE

After the death of Prior Kendal, and until his successor was appointed, the chief authority passed to the Subprior, Dom Martin Leveaux, then in his seventieth year, a French monk who had been trained by the Maurists and was rather a martinet. To him, therefore, fell the duty of organising the move. Four priests, eleven professed juniors, one novice, two lay brothers, and fifteen boys made up the party. On 28th April the start was made; the brass plate, 'Acton Burnell College,' was taken down; and the whole community walked to Atcham Bridge to meet the Shrewsbury and Worcester coach, the whole of the accommodation of which had been reserved. They slept at the Star Inn at Worcester, and there caused some astonishment by standing rigidly round the table and intoning the whole of the long Benedictine grace before supper. Dom Leveaux was an advocate for 'full observance.' Next day they slept at Bath, and then, while the boys were left at Bath for a few days, the community the next morning started off by canal to go to their new home. Canal-boat progress was not rapid, the one horse took a long time to complete the journey, and it was towards evening before they arrived at Paulton and walked thence to Stratton and the gates of Downside House, or Mount Pleasant, as it is called in the road-book. They found an empty house; the furniture had not arrived; they slept as best they could on the bare boards with a sprinkling of straw. The next morning, despite the want of furniture, so Dom Leveaux decided, they rose as usual for the Divine Office in the empty room which was later to serve as chapel, and, after the Office, studies! There were no books, no chairs, no tables, nothing but the bare floor, but the full monastic life of

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the juniorate began and was carried on from the first day! Truly, as Abbot Snow remarks in his charming *Sketches of Old Downside*, "there were giants in those days."

The 'Old House' still stands, although now it is almost lost among the vast buildings which have grown from it, and so it is easy to get an idea of the life in those first days. The sitting-room to the right of the present entrance, at that time panelled, was the chapel. The two windows facing the lawn were blocked to avoid the window tax, and the altar stood between the other two. The room is sixteen feet square, and the boys were placed immediately in front of the altar on backless benches. The monks, each with a chair, were set choir fashion along the sides. An ancient piano stood at the back, and for feasts it was reinforced by two violoncellos. Abbot Snow has drawn the scene for us: "A priest clad in an unadorned vestment before a makeshift altar, at his heels a thurifer and two acolytes in the only three cassocks, monks standing along the sides of the room in double-breasted cutaway coats and profuse neckcloths, boys in various attire on benches in the middle, and at the back the orchestra, the piano—a piano of 1814 remember—and two grave seigniors working away at the 'cellos. To us it is bizarre, but it has its pathos; it was a part of the beginnings." Such was divine worship in the principal Benedictine monastery of the British Isles within the lifetime probably, though not the knowledge or the memory, of just a few people who are still living.

The manor-house was the monastery proper, and 'Downside College,' the successor of the 'Acton Burnell College' of the past, with fifteen boys, took possession of the older building to the rear, which was only pulled down in 1897, and was known as 'the farmhouse,' or



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sometimes, more vividly, especially by one distinguished member, as 'back of the 'ouse.' The main room on the ground floor, once the two kitchens of two adjoining cottages, was at once study-room, playroom, and refectory. New kitchens were built opening either way from the passage leading to the 'Old House,' and uniting the two buildings. The prefect and the house-keeper lived on the first floor, and the boys slept in the attic, with very inadequate accommodation. Sanitation was not provided for, with the result that the boys were healthy and lived for the most part to a hale old age. The boys washed under the system with which we have already become familiar in the story of the other schools of the period, in a small 'washhouse' with a trough and taps. When it was cold the taps froze and there was no water. "There will be no washing to-day, boys," the prefect would say, and so they went on to studies and Mass. This might go on for two or even three days together. What happened in a more prolonged frost history does not record.

At the head of this little community of four priests and twelve juniors was a very remarkable man, Prior Augustine Lawson, a man of saintly character and gentle firmness. The work done in the way of study sounds prodigious to modern weaklings. "The Directors of the Establishment," ran the prospectus of 1814, wish "to unite to the knowledge of English French Latin and Greek languages, the acquisition of such Sciences as may be either serviceable or ornamental in life. With these ideas before them, they do all in their power to teach their pupils a complete course of History, Ancient and Modern, lay before them a comprehensive system of Geography, general and particular; conduct them through the practical parts of the Mathematics and every branch of Arithmetic, and unfold unto them

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the admirable order and arrangement observable through all the works of nature." Nor was this mere boasting. "I learnt more in a few weeks on entering Downside," wrote Archbishop Ullathorne, "than I had in years before." Certainly, if we may judge a system by its fruits, the old Catholic system of education, which they had brought from France and preserved almost unchanged, must have had its merits.

Of the games at this period there is not much to chronicle. Football was of the usual unscientific kind, a sort of general kickabout which gave good exercise but called for little skill. Cricket was played with underhand bowling, and much swiping, and the 'fields' had their own local names, such as 'middle up *or* chestnut fag,' 'middle down *or* library window fag.' The game was played on the ground opposite St Gregory's quadrangle, still unlevelled, which explains the 'up' and 'down.' The slant was quite considerable, perhaps 1 in 12. There were no overs. The ball was bowled indifferently from either end; 'cads' bowling, as it used to be called in the early seventies, meaning thereby only to imply the popular or village cricket of the near past. The earliest bats were cut by the village carpenter in one piece. Cane handles were of later introduction. Pads were never worn.

The great Downside game was "bat and ball," which was brought from Douay and still survives. It was, and is, played against a high wall with angles, specially erected for the purpose. It is almost identical with the game played at Ushaw, which points to a Douay origin. The Stonyhurst game is rather different, and no doubt stands for the St Omers variety. To connect the game, as some have done, with the *pelota* played in Spain seems fantastic. On the other hand, we may

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remember that Douay was in the sixteenth century under Spanish rule, and the game may have some faint connection with *pelota* in this way.

### THE BUILDING OF ST GREGORY'S

The 'Old Hall,' as we have said, sufficed somehow for all needs for nearly ten years. But by 1823 it was realised that some expansion was necessary. A Mr Goodrich, of Bath, was employed as architect, and he designed a very remarkable building, 'in the Gothick style,' to meet all needs. It is a notable piece of pre-Pugin Gothic, built of hard stone with very close joints, so that it presents the general appearance of an admirable imitation of plaster carried out in real stone. The object seems to have been to lead those who passed along the Fosse Road to believe that they saw before them a real Gothic cathedral, complete with nave and transepts, but with the Old House where the choir should be. Such was the exterior; but, within, it was cut up into a number of fragments for different uses. The first floor of the transepts composed the new chapel, and underneath it was a large refectory, at a later date divided into two for monks and boys apart. The 'nave' provided, on the ground floor, the library and the study-place, with long dormitories at the top; while the first floor, 'Paradise Row,' gave five rooms for monks in front, and a third dormitory behind. The building was designed solely for its 'elevation.' The long windows necessary to give the cathedral effect were cut in half by the floor of the upper story. In 'Paradise Row,' therefore, they went down to the ground; a very uncomfortable arrangement.

Great interest was aroused by the new buildings. A member of Parliament drew the attention of the House



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to the alarming increase of Popery shown by the erection of *two* colleges close to Bath, the one at Downside and the other at Stratton on the Fosse! The new chapel was, we read in various notices of the time, "the admiration of the country," "the finest piece of modern Gothic yet seen." The organ was brought from the Pavilion at Brighton, the great south window was filled with coloured glass in ribbons of strong and discordant colours—deep purple, brick red, and yellow ochre—to the modern eye crude and even painful, but to the Prior and his brethren "very handsome indeed"; and the high altar (now in the crypt under the Lady Chapel of the present church) seemed "one of the finest pieces of carving anywhere to be met with."

The opening ceremony was 10th July 1823, and was an astonishing function for that time. There were present two bishops, two Catholic peers, and "all the respectability of the immediate vicinity" to the number of two hundred and fifty in all. "The Protestants were delighted with the pomp of the ceremony," and so intense was their attention, that "you might have heard a pin drop had it not been for the solemn tones of the organ." Count Mazzinghi himself was at the keyboard playing a Mass of his own composition, so well executed by the community and the boys that "Angels only could sing a more harmonious strain." The sermon alone was a failure. Nevertheless the collection "far exceeded all expectations," and mounted up to no less a sum than £120 all told!

Up to this time the monks at Downside had worn no distinctive dress. The older ones had looked back with longing to the days at Douay when full monastic life was possible. From this day, however, 10th July 1823, they made an advance so far as to wear as the special garb of the community the university dress of

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cap and gown. Cassocks were never worn by any except on Sundays by thurifer and acolytes. The monastic habit was first worn in November 1848, and to this was added the cowl in choir a year later. Till then the monastery possessed but one cowl, which was never used except on the occasion of the profession of a monk.

These professions being against the existing law then, as they still are nominally, took place with closed shutters in the darkened chapel of the 'Old House.' No one was allowed to be present but the Prior and Subprior, lest if an informer discovered what was being done, others too should be involved in the felony and its consequences.

### 1823-1854

The block of buildings we have now described satisfied all needs for thirty years. We are now within living memory. There are some still left who can remember when this corner, as it now seems, was the whole of Downside. The school was still small. There were no more than twenty boys in 1823, though the number, with the better accommodation available, climbed rapidly to sixty in 1829.

The day's work at school at this period was still much on the same lines as it had been at Douay. The rattle went at 5.20, and all dressed and came to the study-room at 5.40 for prayers. Washing came next, face and hands only, at the taps. Study began at 6 and went on till 8.15, when breakfast followed. Mass was at 8.35, then study followed till 10; half an hour for recreation, and study till 1 o'clock, which was the dinner-hour, after which recreation till 3. Study again from 3 to 4.30, then half an hour, and study from 5 to 7. Then supper, followed by prayers and

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recreation till 8.45, and then bed. Tuesdays and Thursdays were half-holidays, and no work was done after dinner till 5.30.

These years from 1823 to 1830 are Downside's Golden Age—the Age of Heroes round whom legends gather. From that tiny community of perhaps a dozen monks, with a school of twenty boys, there went forth four bishops—Morris, Browne, Polding, and Ullathorne; while two more, Barber and Wilson, refused the mitre that was offered them. Nor was the influence of the house confined to England. Bishop Morris was appointed in 1831 as Bishop of 'the Vicariate of the Cape of Good Hope,' a diocese that included Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and had under its jurisdiction a third of the surface of the globe. What a diocese! and what a staff to work it! In all Australia, with its penal settlements of Botany Bay and Norfolk Island, including a large portion of Irish Catholics transported for no crime except their share in political risings, and living under conditions of indescribable misery, there were but three priests. Thither in 1832, as Bishop Morris's Vicar-General in New South Wales, there sailed Dom Bernard Ullathorne. He had come to Downside School in 1823, as a boy of seventeen, who had already spent four years at sea in the merchant service, and was now, in 1832, newly ordained as priest at the age of twenty-six. He has told the story of his indefatigable labours in his own *Autobiography*. He it was who induced the Government to allow a bishop to be sent to Australia, and secured the nomination of Dom Bede Polding, his own old novice master. From the English Benedictines, therefore, proceeded the evangelisation of the new world of Australasia. Bishop Slater of Ampleforth was the first Vicar Apostolic of the Cape, and two priests from Downside and one from



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Ampleforth went to help him. He was succeeded by Bishop Morris of Downside, who sent Ullathorne with full powers to Sydney. Ullathorne got Bishop Polding of Downside appointed as Vicar Apostolic of Australia, and he in his turn took out three more from the Downside community as well as one from Douay. *Date et dabitur vobis*, said Cardinal Weld to them at the time; and who can doubt that God's blessing was drawn down to the house by their generosity to their fellow Catholics of the Antipodes, though at the time it crippled their own development at home.

At first it seemed that the blessing of God was coming to them after the fashion of St Ignatius's prayer for his own Society: "God send you much tribulation." They were "wounded in the house of their friends." To the western Vicariate there was appointed as coadjutor in 1823 Bishop Baines, a monk of Ampleforth, and a man of great gifts and imperious will. He came to the opening of the new buildings in 1823, and at once coveted the place as a seminary, which should be for the western Vicariate what Oscott, Old Hall, and Ushaw were already for the other three. He asked the Prior and community to accede to his wish, and was refused on the ground that it would ruin the monastic character of the place. He would not take the refusal, but carried the case to Rome, claiming the house on the ground that it had never been canonically erected as a monastery and therefore had no right of exemption from his control. The very existence of St Gregory's tottered in the balance. In the event, however, they won their case, and the defeated bishop bought the great mansion of Prior Park, above Bath, and opened there a school and seminary of his own. The competition of another school under such auspices so close to itself was almost fatal to St Gregory's. The numbers,

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which in 1829 had reached sixty, fell to forty by 1838. Certainly Bishop Baines had done his best to destroy St Gregory's, and his influence on Ampleforth was even more disastrous. Yet he meant to act for the best, and was a great man and a great bishop. It is pleasant to record that a reconciliation was effected before his death, and that he now lies, with a very beautiful life-size effigy in alabaster, almost under the feet of the Abbot of Downside when he sits on the throne for pontifical functions.

The period from 1823 onwards was, therefore, one of peculiar difficulty; but by 1854 these adverse circumstances had been overcome, the community was stronger, and a further enlargement, which had been talked of for many years and had already led to elaborate plans by the great Pugin, was at length determined upon. It comprised the part known as St Gregory's Court, one of the most pleasing portions of the whole edifice, and provided a new play-room and study-room, the 'palace' for the Christmas festivities, some class-rooms, and about twenty bedrooms for the elder boys. Thus constituted, the school was complete, and so remained for twenty years more. The Old House and Paradise Row formed the monastery; the rest of the building was given up to school purposes. That was the Downside of the older monks still living to-day, during the years of their school life.

### 1870-1925

The next great expansion took place in 1870, when Father Bernard Murphy was Prior. He built the present fine boys' refectory, and began the new monastery on the higher ground. From that time onwards building has never ceased, and that makes it almost

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impossible to tell the tale. One after another, like a giant game of dominoes, blocks of building have been rising, each at right angles to the last, and generally in a different style of architecture. Nothing has ever been finished at one time; masses of black tarpaulin, and even corrugated iron, have joined the uncompleted fragments until more building was possible; and bit by bit, as means allowed and needs dictated, the whole has gradually grown into the wonderful, and on the whole uniform, structure of the present time. It has all the fascination of a living creature, constantly growing and stretching out fresh tentacles to supply novel needs. But it is impossible to give the detailed story in a sketch of this kind. From the point of view of the school, which is that with which we are more immediately concerned, three special portions stand out conspicuously, and it is to these that we must confine ourselves. They are the benefactions of Mgr Petre, the building of the Abbey Church, and the creation of the new school which is still in progress.

### MONSIGNOR PETRE

William Joseph Petre, who succeeded afterwards as thirteenth Lord Petre, came to Downside as a boy in 1860. He was 'King' of the Court of 1864, and left in 1866. He was ordained priest in 1874, and resided at Downside, as a kind of permanent guest with a keen interest in school matters, from that time on till July 1877. During this stay of three years he did much for the school. He gave it the open-air swimming-bath, for many years known, therefore, as 'the Sea of Petre.' He built the beautiful cloister which runs on the lower level and joins up the new monastery with the school buildings. He arranged the library for the



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upper boys, which used to be in the old Goodrich building, two floors being thrown into one to form it, and which still bears his name, though it has been moved into the new school building. He was a great benefactor not only in the way of material gifts, but in helping to widen educational ideas and to bring Catholic schools into line with the rapid development at that time in progress in the great Protestant Public Schools of the country.

### THE ABBEY CHURCH

The conception of the great church, in scale far beyond anything at that time attempted anywhere by Catholics in England, is due to Cardinal Gasquet, who was Prior in 1878. His magnificent confidence would be satisfied with nothing short of the abbeys and cathedrals built by the Order of St Benedict in England in the ages of Faith, and so he induced the community to tear up the plans which had been drawn for them five years before, as being wholly inadequate. Aided especially by his lieutenant, Dom Gilbert Dolan, he planned and carried out the transepts on a scale of real magnificence, leaving it to later years to build the choir and the nave. But, as if to make it impossible for any less robust faith in the future to reduce the scale, he also built, the gift of Madame de Paiva, the Lady Chapel, far away to the east. Many will remember the church as it then stood for several years, the transepts completed and making by themselves a church sufficient for all the needs of the time, but closed in east and west with temporary walls. Beyond there was a ring of chapels—St Isidore, St Gregory, the Sacred Heart, the Lady Chapel, and the rest—quite separate from the transepts, and reached by a long

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tarpaulin-covered passage across the bare space where one day the choir would rise. This space for the time was open to the sky and completely enclosed except for two bays where later would be the entrance to the sacristy of the future, and which would allow the passage of the material whenever the choir came to be built.

The actual building of the choir came in 1900, and, most fortunately, an architect of real genius was available in Mr Thomas Garner. The task was one of almost impossible difficulty. The work that had already been done dictated almost every measurement, and made originality of treatment almost unattainable. But the genius of Mr Garner was equal to the task. He produced a design of far greater dignity and simplicity than the transepts and other chapels that had been built, and yet one that fits on to them with no sense whatever of incongruity. It is unquestionably Mr Garner's finest piece of work, and nothing better has yet been done anywhere in modern building.

Only second to the building of the choir—if, indeed, it is to be reckoned second—must be placed the building of the nave as Downside's 'War Memorial' in 1923–25. No school, surely, in all England has so glorious a memorial for its dead—or a more glorious company of the dead to have earned such a memorial. After Mr Garner's death it seemed as if no one could be hoped for whose genius would be able to design a nave worthy to go with such a choir. One was found in Sir Giles Gilbert Scott; and though the work is still unfinished, two bays and the west front having yet to come, the seven bays that have been built have answered the question triumphantly. England has again an Abbey Church worthy to rank with the Westminster or Glastonbury or St Albans of the past, and alive, as they, alas! are not, with a young and exuberant

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vitality that promises even greater things in the future.

The interior decoration of the great church is still to a great extent unfinished. The high altar is only 'temporary,' and so are the monastic stalls. But one piece of interior decoration stands out especially and calls for notice. It is the treatment of the Lady Chapel by Mr J. N. Comper. He has used gold and colour freely, but with great skill. The alabaster reredos, relieved only by gold, is one of the most beautiful things in all Europe. The whole chapel tells us what our cathedrals must have been like in the ages of Faith, before a dull Puritanism removed the Blessed Sacrament which gave life to all and smothered all the glory of gold and colour under a uniform and dreary whiteness.

The special glory of the Abbey Church above all these material beauties, is its possession of the body of Blessed Oliver Plunkett, Archbishop of Armagh, the last martyr to give his life for the Catholic faith in England. He left his body to the English Benedictines.

### THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Up to the beginning of the present century Downside remained but a small school of less than a hundred boys. To some it seemed that it ought always to remain so, and that only so could the special virtue of a Benedictine school, the close 'family' connection between monks and boys, be kept in being. On the other hand, there could be no doubt that Downside was lagging behind in the great transformation that was coming over the schools of England; that there was a demand among Catholics for larger schools, more comparable with the great Public Schools; that that demand had to be met, and that none—unless the



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whole field was to be left to Stonyhurst, at that time the one Catholic school qualified by numbers to rank as a Public School at all—could meet it more efficiently and with more hope of success than could the Benedictines. The need produced the man, and the appointment of Dom Leander Ramsay, the present Abbot of Downside, to the headmastership in 1902, marks the beginning of the change which in the last twenty years has absolutely transformed the school of Downside. “What can be done elsewhere can be done here” was the motto of his labours, and the new Downside is the result. If something of the old attractive past has gone for ever in the passing of something of the old Benedictine ideals, much has been preserved, and the loss, such as it was, was no doubt inevitable. Downside now has its place in the first rank of the Public Schools of England as the result of his labours, supported as he was by his abbots, and backed especially by his lieutenants, the present Bishop of Lancaster, and Dom Sigebert Trafford, who succeeded him as headmaster and still governs the school.

The new school buildings, planned eventually to accommodate three hundred and fifty boys, were designed by the late Mr Leonard Stokes, and represent the last word in school building, though as yet only a portion is built. On the ground floor is a spacious corridor, and, opening out of it, are the day-rooms and libraries, dignified but not luxurious. On the first floor are the class-rooms, designed according to the latest ideas of light and efficiency; and on the top are the dormitories, open to the roof and complete with spray-baths and washing-places. To one used only to the Spartan simplicities, by comparison, of the schools of the last generation the whole seems almost unduly palatial. One wonders whether the modern

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small boy really likes sleeping in a dormitory that in dim light might almost be mistaken for the nave of a church, or whether he really enjoys being washed all over, even in hot water, quite so frequently. A story which used to be told by a former superior may illustrate what is meant. He had taken some prospective parents round the new buildings, but they seemed depressed. "Have you no other dormitories to show us?" inquired the mother. "Yes," he admitted rather unwillingly, "there is another." He showed it, with its stuffy cubicles, inadequate ventilation, and small windows, and was just going to explain that it was only tolerated for the moment and to be swept away as soon as possible, when he was eagerly interrupted. "Please, please," she said, "may Tommy sleep here. It is so much more homelike." Certainly the Downside School of the present and the future has travelled very far from the simple ideals of 'Downside College' at 'the back of the 'ouse,' with its one public room for play, eating, and work and its crowded attic dormitory. If Americans are right in speaking of 'civilisation' as only another word for 'modern plumbing,' the Public School boy of to-day must be a highly civilised being.

More recent developments still are a big gymnasium, where excellent work is done in the way of physical training, and which also provides a stage and other accessories for the production of plays. This is frankly temporary, and, to speak plainly, an eyesore, whose usefulness is its only excuse for existence. It replaces some beautiful beeches, so the loss to Downside is two-fold. There is an aviary with various rare birds; and strange pets, such as a pair of kangaroos, one of which, alas! has lately died, wander freely about the bounds and strike a novel note in school life. Quite recently, too, Mr Arthur Allan has presented a very fine covered

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swimming-bath, and some five courts, in memory of his son, who died soon after leaving the school. These are still, at the time of writing, unfinished, but will be very valuable adjuncts, providing bathing facilities at times when the older open-air bath is not available.

### DOWNSIDE AT THE PRESENT TIME

At the present time the total number of the boys in the school is a little over three hundred. Of these, about one hundred and eighty compose the Upper School, and the remaining one hundred and twenty form the Lower or Preparatory department. The Lower School is not in a separate building—all are under one roof—but there are separate refectories, separate play- and class-rooms, and separate playing-fields. Even in the church the two divisions of the school attend, to a great extent, different services. So there is practically no communication at all between the two schools.

Discipline is to a very large extent in the hands of boy prefects. One of these is the Captain of the school, and he is assisted by four or five school prefects. These have no power of corporal punishment, though they can give various lesser punishments when it is needed. They have their own privileges, chief among which is the right of a week-end's leave each term and free bounds at all times.

There is a house system, but no system of house masters. The 'houses,' of which there are four—Barlow, Caverel, Roberts, and Smythe—have each their own day-rooms and dormitories. Each house has also its own prefects, who are distinct from the 'school prefects' of whom we have already spoken, and have smaller powers and less privilege. There is keen



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competition among the 'houses' for various cups and trophies.

Every boy in the Upper School is a member of the O.T.C., and the whole corps goes to camp at the beginning of the summer holidays. There is a competition here also between the houses for shooting, drill, and so forth. The corps has been very successful also in the competitions with other schools at camp, and has won the 'gym' competition each of the last two years, 1924-25. In 1925 the band, bugles and fife, also was first in the camp competition.

At cricket matches are played against Sherborne, Blundells, Radley, and Dartmouth; and at Rugby football, the game which undoubtedly excites the greatest enthusiasm at the school, the list of matches is the same, but with the addition also of Cheltenham and Clifton. Several 'Rugger' blues have been won by old boys at the universities in recent years. Hockey and tennis are also played.

Passing to the more intellectual features of the school, the Abingdon Society provides opportunity for debates on current subjects of interest, and the Literary Society stimulates interest in problems of literature. There is also a flourishing 'Wireless' Society.

The teaching staff is a mixed one, consisting in about equal numbers of monks and of lay graduates of various universities. A good number of scholarships and exhibitions have been won, and two fellowships, both at Trinity College, Cambridge, by Mr A. de Navarro and Mr O. Evenett. A special mention ought to be made here, too, of Mr Stephen Hewitt, who a few years ago swept off most of the university prizes at Oxford, including the Hertford and the Ireland. His lamented death in the War cut short a career from which much was expected.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION

#### AMPLEFORTH COLLEGE

WE left the Fathers of St Lawrence's, Dieuleward, without a home. They had just been obliged to leave Acton Burnell.<sup>1</sup> In this matter the only choice before them was either to amalgamate with the community of St Gregory's and let St Lawrence's die out altogether, or to seek a new home. To remain permanently with two communities under separate priors in one place was obviously impossible. So they went forth, like Abraham of old, 'not knowing whither they went.'

They were a sadly shrunken community, compared with the past at Dieuleward. Four more had died before they eventually found a settled home. For seven long years, from 1795 to 1802, they were wanderers, moving from one hired house to another, with no hope of being able to buy the freehold and make a permanent foundation in any one of their temporary resting-places. The idea of a school was never given up altogether. At Vernon Hall, Liverpool, and at Parbold Hall there were small schools kept to which many boys of good Catholic family were sent, including, among others, the sons of the Earl of Shrewsbury and Sir Henry Tichborne. But a large school was impossible.

At the end of the century it looked as if the com-

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 191.

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munity of St Lawrence's was going to come to an end. They had no permanent home, and were getting no novices or other recruits. There were ideas of emigration to the Colonies. Overtures were made by the Bishop of Baltimore, which came to nothing. At a later date there was a scheme for settling in Madeira, but this again led to no result.

Meanwhile, ever since 1793, the solution of their difficulties had been available, though it does not seem to have occurred to anyone. There was one freehold house in the possession of one of the *familia*, though of one who had been for very many years living out of community life. This was Ampleforth Lodge, not far from York.

The Benedictines of Dieuleward had been for generations connected with the Fairfax family, who lived at Gilling Castle, in Mowbray Vale. They had acted as chaplains to the house, with only brief intervals, ever since the early part of the seventeenth century. In the latter part of the eighteenth century Gilling Castle belonged to Lady Ann Fairfax, and the chapel was served by Father Anselm Bolton for a great number of years. Lady Ann died in 1793; and, wishing to make provision for the priest who had served the family so long, had built for him a house on the opposite side of the valley, to which was attached thirty-two acres of land. She also left a legacy of £2000 as an endowment. The legacy was disputed, as being left 'for superstitious purposes,' and was lost, but the house and grounds had been made over by deed of gift before death, and Father Bolton had taken possession while Lady Ann was still alive. He was, in 1798, when the legacy was definitely lost, actually living there, but with no means of support. It was then that the idea was broached of transferring the community of St Lawrence to this house, and removing Father Bolton



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elsewhere for the remainder of his days. It was, no doubt, a great sacrifice for him; but he loyally agreed to the scheme, and went to live with another priest at Birtley, where he died in 1805.

Ampleforth Lodge, which thus in 1802 became the home of the St Lawrence community, was a larger house than one man could have used. It still exists, and is the nucleus out of which the whole modern monastery and school have been evolved. The development at Ampleforth and at Downside has been curiously different in character. At Downside the 'Old House' forms one extremity of the long line of buildings which curve round and almost come back to it again. At Ampleforth it was and is the very centre of the whole. Take the front door of the older buildings, with two windows on either side, the five windows on the floor above, and the five smaller windows on the second floor, and you have the original front of 'Ampleforth Lodge,' now merged into the much larger frontage of the whole building. Everything else has developed right and left of this one centre.

To this small but substantial house the scattered community of St Lawrence now rallied. Two priests, Father Appleton as Prior, and Father Slater as novice master, with one junior, Clement Rishton; three novices, Molyneux, Baines, and Glover, and one lay brother, William Sharrock, formed the whole community. Of these only two, Father Slater, who at that time had been only a novice, and the lay brother, William Sharrock, had been at Dieuleward when the blow fell in 1793. It was a small and struggling community. The only income available for the upkeep of the house and its inmates was an annual sum of about £200 a year.

The house, which now became the monastery, had

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two rooms on the ground floor, one on each side of the door, with a hall and staircase. There were two good bedrooms on the next floor, and attics above. The parlours became the refectory and calefactory, the two rooms above were given to the Prior and Subprior, and the attics became the novitiate. Thus all were accommodated.

The boys began to arrive the next year, 1806, with the closing of Parbold Hall. They were lodged in the old house at the back, a portion of which still stands and is now utilised as a laundry. It was, presumably, the original farmhouse on the property, in front of which, exactly as at Downside, the new Ampleforth Lodge had been erected by Lady Ann. So it was itself a substantial and commodious building, much better than one could have expected to find as a mere adjunct to the house in front. Its plan and arrangement was substantially the same as that of the newer house. The entrance lobby gave access to the study-room on the left, and to the refectory (which was also the playroom) on the right. Above there was only one story, providing a dormitory some thirteen feet square on the left, and the chapel on the right, of the same size. The height of this upper and attic story was so low that it was impossible for a mitre to be worn at the altar; and an additional space was formed for this purpose in the roof. The room was lighted by a skylight in the slant of the ceiling to the north, and by three small windows low down, before the roof began to slant, to the south. Here not only was the Divine Office recited by the community and Holy Mass celebrated, but at intervals there were episcopal functions. That the Office was duly recited any of the boys who slept in the other room could have borne testimony.

Such a chapel could not suffice for long, and a new

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chapel was commenced almost at once to the west of the existing house. More accommodation, too, was urgently needed for the boys. A single room thirteen feet square, with sloping ceiling, and only eight feet high in the middle, cannot, even if all considerations of ventilation be ignored, contain more than a very limited number of beds. Moreover, there was no lavatory accommodation at all. A pump stood half-way between the two buildings. There, weather permitting, were carried out the morning ablutions of the first boys of Ampleforth School.

But even if they were lodged with such insufficient accommodation and consequent discomfort, there was much consolation to be derived from the beauty of the situation of their new home. Ampleforth is placed on the southern slope of the long, rather steep ridge of hills which forms the northern side of the Vale of Mowbray. It basks in sunshine, with full southern exposure, and is sheltered from the northern winds. In front stretch the wide flat meadows of the valley, bounded on the other side by another range of wooded hills. It is a difficult site for building purposes, if buildings of any great extent are required, for it is necessary, on account of levels, to stretch them out to great length in a single line. Moreover, foundations give a great deal of trouble, and require vast quantities of cement to be buried underneath and apparently wasted. The playing-fields below, in the same way, have called for a vast amount of labour to get them level. In earlier days boys would have played on the slopes, and probably evolved a special game to suit the ground. But the modern schoolboy is not so adaptable. The district is one of exceptional salubrity, and well removed from any town, though a railway now runs through the valley.



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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The period from 1811 to 1825 was a time of great building activity. When it comes to an end we find that the original house has been completely engulfed. Wings, of almost equal size with the original, have appeared on either side. A new story has been added on in the centre, which, however, does not extend to the wings. Other building has appeared at the back of the house, including a new staircase and passage to give access to the added parts; and the accommodation altogether has been vastly increased. Ampleforth, in the form reached in 1825, before the final repeal of the Penal Laws, sufficed for all requirements till 1852.

It had been a period of rapid development, both in the monastery and the school, largely owing to the activity and zeal of one very remarkable man, Dom Augustine Baines, who had been one of the three original novices when the community took possession of Ampleforth Lodge. He was a man who had realised, fifty years before his time, the value of 'publicity.' The Ampleforth advertisement in the *Catholic Directory* of 1815 is a very notable document. Other schools contented themselves with a notice extending over a third, or at most half, of a page. The Ampleforth advertisement covers four full pages. The accommodation at the time must still have been very scanty, but the prospectus is altogether astonishing in its promises. The first and second classes were reading Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French. In history they were content with nothing less than the general history of the world, with "a connected account of the particular histories of Rome, Greece, Assyria, &c." and "a most minute account of the history of England from the landing of Julius Cæsar to the present time comprising

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more than a thousand different dates." In arithmetic and algebra the boys were prepared to work any sums proposed to them in any of the principal rules, and generally "without slate or paper." The first class studied Linnæus's *Mammalia*, the second class the 'Birds' by the same author, while the third class studied his system of botany. All this was to be accomplished by means of Professor von Feinagles's system of memories, which he had himself communicated to the college, and it was confidently expected that the result would be to "enable a young man, on leaving the College, to appear in Society with the solid learning of a scholar as well as the elegant acquirements of a gentleman."

Certainly it is a remarkable description of a school which at the time can scarcely have had more than about a dozen or twenty pupils, and was so humbly lodged. But 'publicity' had its due result, and boys came as fast as the new buildings allowed of their being received. Very soon after the completion of the work the number had reached eighty. But then there occurred an event which all but wrecked the community, and threw back the development of Ampleforth for many years.

Dom Augustine Baines, to whose restless energy so much of the rapid advance was due, left Ampleforth for Bath in 1817. There his undoubted gifts soon attracted attention, and he became Bishop of Siga and coadjutor for the Western District in 1823, when he was thirty-seven years of age. He felt the need of a school and seminary which should be to the Western District, the Cinderella of the Vicariates, what Old Hall, Ushaw, and Oscott had become to the other three. He was too poor to buy, so he attempted to fill the need in other ways. Since the Western District was by custom always given to a Benedictine, he desired a Benedictine

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seminary, and not unnaturally cast envious eyes on Downside. The story of his attempt to get possession of the monastery and school at that place has already been told. It failed altogether, though he took the matter to Rome. Judgment was given wholly in favour of the monks.

At this juncture the great house of Prior Park, on the hills above Bath, came into the market. Bishop Baines bought it as an episcopal residence, and also to supply the need he so much felt of a seminary and school. As Downside, not unnaturally, would now have nothing to do with his projects, he turned to Ampleforth. Here his personal influence was strong, and he had much more success; so much success, indeed, that he very nearly dealt Ampleforth its death-blow. He induced the Prior, Dr Burgess, the Sub-prior, and the Procurator to leave the monastery, apply for secularisation, and throw in their lot with him; taking with them all the novices except one, and thirty of the best boys of the school. The less said of the whole transaction the better. It is certainly very hard to justify the action either of the Bishop or of the Prior and his associates.

The secession took place in 1830. The number of boys was then eighty. It was more than thirty years before that number was reached again. Prior Towers, who succeeded to the administration, was not a success. The next twenty years, from 1830 to 1850, are a time of depression and crippled resources.

### AMPLEFORTH, 1825-1850

The 'new' chapel which had taken the place of the old attic in the house at the back, was in the west wing, the left as one faces the building. It did not show



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externally as a chapel, and occupied two floors, with a dormitory over. Round three sides ran a broad gallery, with an altar at each end. The high altar was at the back or northern side. In the gallery facing the high altar was the monastic choir, and boys sat on the two sides of the gallery and below in the main body of the church. There was an outside door, and the chapel served the neighbourhood as well as the monastery. The two chapels were cut off from the gallery by walls with doors, but were open at the side. A single 'dip' sufficed to light the church below. There was no provision for heating.

In the other wing was the playroom, with its windows, oddly enough, looking north, and a blank wall to the south shutting out the sun and the beautiful view. Above it was the study-place, which, on the contrary, looked south, and was a pleasant room. A large stove in the centre of the playroom was surrounded by a ring of benches. Its smoke-pipe passed through the centre of the study-place, and did something towards warming that room also. The desks in the study-place were double, and about twelve feet long, the boys facing each other, an ideally bad arrangement. The desks ran east and west, and as the master's desk was against the south wall, looking along the desk opposite him, half of the boys had their backs towards him. Three dip candles were allotted to each desk, and made the darkness visible. It was exactly the plan the writer remembers at his own 'prep' school about 1870-75, with this difference only, that his master had two candles at his desk, whereas the Prefect at Ampleforth had but one.

These somewhat inadequate arrangements sufficed somehow or other until the middle of the century, when with the arrival of the Oxford converts a new

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wave of prosperity and zeal spread everywhere among Catholics in England. At Ampleforth it shows itself in new buildings. The school by this time had once more reached a total of eighty boys, and the accommodation was quite insufficient, especially in the chapel and playrooms. The monastery was in no better state.

### BUILDINGS, 1852-1926

The new church was begun in 1852, when the jubilee of the foundation of Ampleforth was kept. The architect was Mr Charles Hansom. It was built and still stands (although it is now gradually being superseded by the larger church built by Sir G. G. Scott) to the west of the old house, and adjoining it. It is a very creditable piece of work for the time, in light Gothic, but it was planned on too small a scale for the developments that were soon to come, and has never been altogether adequate to its task. It was opened in 1857.

When the church was finished the new school was at once begun in 1859. This was built to the east, on the opposite side to the church, and was an enormous improvement on anything there had been before. It put Ampleforth at once into the rank of a first-class school, which it could have hardly have been described as being, so far as its material side is concerned, at any earlier date.

After this was finished there was a pause in the development of the school which lasted for some considerable time. For the small school, comparatively speaking, which was all that was as yet envisaged, the accommodation was now complete, and well up to the standard of other schools of the same size at that period.

A new period of activity began in 1894, coinciding with the great impetus given to every branch of Catholic

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education by the entry of Catholics once more into the national universities. So far everything had been done for the boys and but little for the monks. A new monastery was erected to the west of the church, which henceforward divided the monastery and the school. It is a fine building, and well planned, but not very successful from the artistic point of view. The whole of the basement is given up to the library, the calefactory and other public rooms are on the next floor, and accommodation for some fifty monks is provided above. The completion of the work in 1897 was reached in good time for the celebrations which accompanied the raising of Ampleforth from a priory to the rank of an abbey, which took place in 1900.

Building at Ampleforth since 1900 has been almost continuous, and the development rapid. A large new room known as the Theatre gives good accommodation for plays and other entertainments; and underneath there is a good indoors swimming-bath, which supplements in colder weather the large outdoor bath down in the playing-fields below. The cricket grounds have been levelled, and two good pavilions built. A good gymnasium has been provided, and in many other ways the school has been brought up to date. But none of these improvements call for any detailed description. There are, however, three very remarkable developments which cannot be left unnoticed. These are: the new Preparatory School, the building of the first separate Boarding-House, and, most of all, the rebuilding of the Abbey Church.

### THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The Preparatory School was built just at the beginning of the War, and opened in 1916. It stands at the extreme end of the long range of buildings to the west,



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and is entirely detached, and run as a wholly distinct undertaking. There is a separate staff, and the boys from the Preparatory never meet the boys of the college under any circumstances, except that brothers are allowed to see each other on Sunday afternoons. The school is admirably planned, every room full south and flooded with sunshine, and there is accommodation for seventy boys, with every modern convenience, such as spray-baths and central heating. There is a chapel in the building where these boys have their services without going over to the Abbey Church, and there are separate playing-fields. A very special feature is an aviary with a wonderful stock of bright-coloured birds from every part of the globe, which is of never-ending interest to the boys.

### THE FIRST BOARDING-HOUSE

The number of boys in the Upper School is now about two hundred, besides seventy in the Preparatory. Some way of dividing them into smaller units has therefore become necessary. Other schools have been beforehand in providing some kind of 'house system' by which competition and emulation can be introduced. But, with the exception of St Edmund's, Old Hall, these 'houses' are not real houses at all, for they have not got that which is, after all, the most essential item in the 'house system,' namely, a separate house-master who is in full charge. To Cardinal Bourne at St Edmund's must be given the credit of being the first to realise this important point, and to bring it into being by separating up the existing buildings into houses, and assigning a special master to each. Ampleforth has gone a step further in actually erecting a new and fully equipped house, built for the purpose. The

## THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION

main object of a house system at a public school is, after all, not so much the rousing of competitive *esprit de corps* in games and so forth, as the ensuring that every boy who comes to the school shall be, during the whole period of his stay, under the close charge and immediate supervision of a single master, who will thus get to know him and understand him and his needs in a way which is quite impossible for the headmaster, who has to rule the whole school of possibly even a thousand boys. Ampleforth have realised this, and taken steps to meet the need. There will be three houses at first, the existing buildings supplying two, and the new house the third. As the school increases in numbers other houses will be provided, and each will be put under the charge of a master specially selected for that purpose. Only thus, in a school of several hundred boys, can it be ensured that every boy has his own particular needs and idiosyncrasies properly noted and cared for. It is difficult for any one man to know, thus intimately, more than about fifty boys. A new block of laboratories, etc., for science is also projected.

## THE NEW ABBEY CHURCH

By far the most important of all the changes which are taking place at Ampleforth is, of course, the rebuilding of the Abbey Church. The older church had become quite inadequate, both in dignity and accommodation, through the rapid growth of both community and school. It has been determined to rebuild it entirely, and the whole work has been entrusted to the most capable hands of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. He is being given a free hand, without any limitation as to style and so forth, and in consequence is producing a work which is more original and distinctive than any-

## THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

thing he has yet done, and which may well, when it is finished, prove to be as inspiring a departure from the more usual styles as was Mr Bentley's great effort in the building of Westminster Cathedral thirty years ago.

The style he has chosen for the new church is more or less Romanesque, but with pointed arches. It owes much, especially in decoration, to the wonderful churches of Provence, and especially to the church of St Trophimus at Arles. The roofing recalls Westminster, and gives an effect of great space and strength. It consists of three large shallow concrete domes, the centre one of which will be surmounted by a large square tower and low spire. The treatment throughout is exceedingly severe, which is suitable in a district so rich in old Cistercian abbeys. In the centre rises a great arch-baldacchino, over the high altar, which is a double one, with the monastic choir on one side and the congregation in the nave on the other. The treatment of this baldacchino, with its great hanging rood, is exceedingly fine and original, and the plan solves most happily the very difficult problem of making a single great church serve simultaneously the needs of a choir of monks for the Divine Office, and also those of a large congregation for the services which they attend.

Underneath there is a crypt, due to the slant of the land, with a number of side altars, each treated in the same severe manner, with the bare stones showing and no frontals. They are real sacrificial altars in appearance. In one is the old high altar of Byland Abbey, the gift of Major Stapleton, showing the old consecration crosses, and thus returning to its proper use after long desecration. The Blessed Sacrament will not be at the high altar, but in a chapel in the upper church, which will also be the school War Memorial. Altogether it should be a very notable church indeed.



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## ST BENET'S HALL, OXFORD

Ampleforth has shown enterprise beyond any of the other Catholic colleges in establishing a House of Studies at Oxford, where the younger members of the Order can take higher studies and degrees and so fit themselves for the teaching staff of the school. There are other similar houses, of course, both at Oxford and at Cambridge. But Benet Hall at Oxford is the only one which is due to the energy and initiative of a single monastery or college, and which has attained to a permanent position, being recognised by the university as a 'Hall' which is entrusted with the discipline of its own students, and presents them for examinations and degrees. The Hall was started in a small way in a house in the Woodstock Road (No. 103) in 1897. Three years later it attained to the position of a Private Hall. At last, in 1918, under a new statute, it was made a permanent part of the university, under the official title of *Aula Sancti Benedicti*. Its home had been meanwhile moved, first, to 8 and 9 Beaumont Street, and then to very roomy premises in St Giles'. In time it is hoped it will become a priory, and so repeat the history of the Benedictine halls before the Reformation.

## GAMES AT AMPLEFORTH

Ampleforth is well provided with playing-fields in the valley beneath the college. The big cricket ground is one of extraordinary beauty, with the hills making the background all round. There is an outdoor swimming-bath as well as an indoor one, the latter being under the theatre, where is a fully equipped stage for dramatic entertainments. As at most Catholic schools Rugby football is the most popular game.

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There is a ball-place of the usual type, as in the other schools which came from France. All the Upper School belong to the O.T.C., and go to camp in the summer.

The situation of the school being in the North, makes it a little difficult to provide matches with other schools, for these are few and far between, compared with the conditions in the South. There are annual matches, both cricket and football, against Stonyhurst, Sedbergh, St Peter's School at York, and Durham School.

Perhaps the most interesting of the other sports is the pack of beagles which belongs to the school, and with which good sport is obtained in the spring months. Eton, we believe, is the only other school that keeps its own pack of beagles. The boys themselves provide the Master and the Whips, and there is a professional huntsman.

For those who are more intellectually inclined there are two debating societies, a literary society, a musical society, and a scientific club. Dramatic performances, of a distinctly ambitious character, are given frequently in the theatre, and the concerts of the musical society are also often of considerable merit.

The discipline of the school is to some extent left to the boys. There is a 'Head Monitor' appointed each year, and also a Captain of the Games. Then there are also eight other 'Monitors.' The 'Monitor's Room' is the room in the old house on the right hand of the door, which was originally assigned to the Prior in the earliest days of the monastery. Till the house system can be introduced, some of the advantages are secured by dividing the school into 'sets' for the purpose of competition.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION

#### ST EDMUND'S, DOUAY

THE school which now bears the name of 'Douai College,' at Woolhampton, in Berkshire, came to its present home only as lately as 1903. When the monks of St Gregory's determined in 1818 to remain at their new house at Downside, acquired only two years before, and declined to avail themselves of the opportunity which was offered them in that year to return to their old ruined monastery at Douay, it was decided by the Congregation of the English Benedictines to offer those premises to the monks of St Edmund's. These were at the moment homeless, having been driven out of their old home at Paris in 1793, and not having succeeded either in getting back or in finding a new home. We must therefore begin the history of St Edmund's, Woolhampton, by going back to the original foundation of the *familia* in 1615 in the Faubourg St Jacques at Paris.

#### ST EDMUND'S, PARIS

St Edmund's, Paris, was in its origin an offshoot from St Lawrence's, Dieuleward, of which we have treated in the last chapter. In the year 1615, at the invitation of the Princess Marie of Lorraine, Abbess of the royal abbey of Chelles, six monks were sent, under Dom Francis Walgrave, to act as chaplains at the abbey and at the same time to prosecute their studies at the Sor-



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bonne. This new community put itself under the protection of St Edmund, king and martyr, in memory of the great but fallen abbey of Bury St Edmunds.

As there was no school connected with the Priory while it remained at Paris, its history there does not fall within the scope of this book. It is of interest, however, to note that James II, in his exile at St Germain, was in close friendship with the little community. He had his own cell in the monastery, to which he used to come for spiritual retreats. When he died, his body was embalmed and entrusted to the monks of St Edmund's. James was greater in adversity than in prosperity, and his life in exile had been such that he had acquired a great reputation for sanctity. Pilgrims in numbers came to his grave, and many miracles were asserted to have been wrought there. His body remained undisturbed for a hundred and twelve years. The coffin was opened during the French Revolution, and the body was found to be quite incorrupt. It survived that time of terror, even after its guardians had been driven away, and was eventually reburied with considerable pomp at St Germain de Laye by order of George IV, when the Allies were at Paris in 1818.

In the troubles of the French Revolution the little English house of St Edmund's was not likely to survive when the great French monasteries were falling all around. In 1793 the monastery was suppressed, and the community scattered. In 1818 only three of them survived. These three, in whom centred all the rights of the former community, empowered in that year the Northern Provincial of the English Benedictines, Dr Marsh of Ampleforth, to revive St Edmund's in a new house at Douay.

# THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION

## ST EDMUND'S, DOUAY

No one of these three survivors felt equal themselves to help in initiating the new house. Dom Charles Fairclough of Ampleforth, who had only just been professed and was not yet a priest, was selected for the purpose. Dr Marsh himself went over with him as Superior to start the work, and four boys accompanied them to form the nucleus of the school.

They found everything in ruins. A new prison had been built in part of the gardens; the church was tumbling down; a great pile of rubbish, the result of sugar factories which had possessed the site for years, occupied the cloister garth; a blacksmith's forge was being carried on in the old study-place; and several families had taken up their abode in the galleries and upper rooms.

In those earliest days Brother Charles Fairclough alone filled every minor office in the house. He helped teach the boys, cooked the dinner, and was himself house bursar, prefect, teacher, and general servant. He was ordained priest at Douay in 1821, and was then recalled to the English mission. In the last two years of his life he came back to Douay to die, and passed away after a long illness on 4th April 1880.

Dr Marsh remained at Douay till 1826, though he was chosen President General in 1823. By that time he had succeeded in making the old monastery a more suitable place of residence. Other boys had joined the original four, and had remained on to be professed for the new community. Dr Marsh was himself novice master and theological professor. By 1825 the first priest was ordained, Dom Francis Appleton, and he was followed the next year by Dom Bernard Collier. Dr Marsh then, after eight years' labours, came to the

## THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

conclusion that he could leave the new foundation to itself, and Father Collier was appointed the first Prior. He held the office for seven years, and then was succeeded by Father Appleton. St Edmund's was now fully and canonically constituted as a Benedictine priory, and its future was more or less secure.

All through the time that the tenure of the monastery at Douay continued, the school was exclusively an ecclesiastical one. It was not exactly an 'alumniat,' for boys were received for other monasteries and to be trained for the secular priesthood, nor was it quite a 'seminary,' for the same reason. It was an ecclesiastical school, where every boy was hoping for a vocation and being trained accordingly, and which he left on coming to the decision that he was not meant for the ecclesiastical state. At the same time there was a novitiate for the house itself for those who wished to become Benedictines and join the community.

The old church of St Gregory's had never been capable of restoration, and was entirely out of use. The new community had at first a temporary chapel in one of the galleries, and this sufficed till about 1840, when it was decided that a new chapel should be built at the south end of the college. The plans were drawn by Pugin, and the decoration was done by Hardman. The work was completed about 1845. Beneath the church was the new refectory. Besides this very considerable work a good deal of other building was instituted about the same time, including new study-rooms and lavatories. The old chapel became the monks' calefactory. Everything had prospered under a series of remarkable Priors, several of whom were afterwards raised to the Episcopate as Bishop of Port Louis in Mauritius, a see which became almost the property of this house. By 1870 the community had grown to an



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adequate size, and the boys to the number of seventy, and the house was complete as far as all the necessary appanages of a monastic school are concerned.

In 1870 the college was once more threatened by the dangers of war. Douay, situated as it is in what may be called the cockpit of Europe, is always in the thick of any fighting that may be going on. The actual warfare came, in January 1871, as close to it as Bapaume, only twenty miles away. Very soon after that the French were in full retreat, and the removal of both community and school into Belgium to avoid the advancing Prussians was very seriously considered. But an armistice was declared, and peace followed, so the danger was averted and no migration was necessary. Numbers fell, naturally, to a very considerable extent during the war, but soon rose again.

The period after the war was marked specially by a series of benefactions from Mr Granville Ward, the eldest son and heir of Mr William George Ward of the Oxford Movement. These included a very fine guest-house, a cloister for the convenience of the community, and a whole new wing for the college. He also laid down and levelled the cricket ground at the country-house at Planques, a mile away, which had been bought in 1884, and which provided adequate grounds for sports as well as a lake for bathing purposes.

The last event of importance which took place while the school was at Douay was the erection of the Priory into an Abbey by Leo XIII. Dom Lawrence Larkin was elected as the first Abbot on the 10th October 1900. Everything seemed to augur well for his reign, and for the future of the Abbey. But, as it turned out, only three years were to pass before the blow was to fall and the community and school of St Edmund's were once more to be driven out and to find themselves without

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a home, and dispossessed of all they had so painfully built up in the course of the eighty-five years they had been at Douay. The illiberal action of the French Republic, which, by the law promulgated in 1901, made it illegal for any religious institution to teach in France, was the cause which brought the disaster.

At first it was thought that the new law would not apply to the English houses, which were specially legalised under the Government, and had for many a century had a special office, 'Les fondations Anglaises,' to pay over funds each year in recognition of the losses suffered in 1793. But the bigotry of the French Government of the time was above all merely logical considerations, and the application for recognition was refused. The British Government, under Sir Edward Grey as Foreign Secretary, could not or did not avert the blow, and the suppression of the house and confiscation of its property was duly carried out in 1903.

Fortunately there had been time, before the actual decree was executed, to convey to England a good many of the more valuable possessions of the house. A very noteworthy collection of pictures, including one of himself given to St Edmund's, Paris, by James II, and portraits of a number of notable ecclesiastics, among whom are Cardinal Allen (1522-94) and Thomas Stapleton (1535-98), was sent to England, and is now at Woolhampton. The church plate and the more valuable vestments were also saved, as were the archives and the most important portion of the books; but almost everything else was lost, nor has the French Government seen fit to make any restitution of any kind. The boys and most of the community left on the 18th June 1903. Six of the community remained behind, and the house was finally given up on the 3rd July. Thus ended the long connection of the English

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Benedictines with Douay. It began in 1622, forty-three years after Allen had made his foundation. So the total connection of English Catholics with Douay stretched over three hundred and thirty-four years, and that of the Benedictines over two hundred and eighty-one.

### DOUAI SCHOOL, WOOLHAMPTON

Like 'the Gentlemen of Liege' a hundred years before, the banished community had at least this consolation, that they had a refuge to which they could go. There they could house both monks and boys until they had finally decided where to make their permanent home. The Bishop of Portsmouth, Mgr Cahill, had made them the offer, if they should have to leave Douay, of his own school of St Mary's, Woolhampton. That offer they decided at once to accept as a temporary measure, and in the event they determined to remain there altogether. The community arrived there on the 5th September 1903. The boys followed two days later. On the 17th took place the solemn official translation of the Abbey of St Edmund's, from Douay to Woolhampton, by virtue of a Papal Rescript.

The new Abbey stood upon ground that had always been Catholic. The Lords of the Manor before the Reformation had been the Knights Hospitallers of St John and the Abbey of St James at Reading. After the dissolution of the monasteries the lands were granted in 1544 to William Wollascott, who remained faithful throughout to the old religion. The family sheltered priests when they could, and so kept Catholicism alive in the neighbourhood. The direct male line came to an end in 1757, and the heiress married the seventh Earl of Fingall, and carried the land to that family. After her death the property was sold, but a



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few acres were retained and conveyed to the ecclesiastical authorities for the purpose of building a church and providing a priest for the Catholics of the neighbourhood. This property it was that was now sold to the Douay Benedictines.

When it was originally given by Lord Fingall to the Church there were about six acres of land, on which were some cottages. One of these cottages did duty for a chapel and another for the house of the priest for some thirty or forty years. Then in 1829 a French priest, Father Stephen Dantrine, was appointed. He had some money of his own, and spent it on the place, building a new chapel and a house, more suitable than the old cottage for a priest's residence.

After a time it was decided to open a small school for boys. A lady living close by, Miss Agnes Edwards, gave her whole fortune for the purpose, and acted herself for many years as matron of the school. The school succeeded, and was profitable. Father Dantrine erected a block of buildings to accommodate the boys, turned the chapel into a refectory, and built the church which is still in use. Cardinal (then Bishop) Wiseman assisted at its opening in 1846.

Father Dantrine died in 1855, and his successor was Dr Crookall, who was President of the college for thirty years. The school continued to flourish throughout this period. On his retirement he was succeeded by Canon Conway, who rebuilt the whole. But the prosperity of the school did not keep pace with the improvement of the buildings. It seemed to the Bishop, Mgr Cahill, that a religious order would probably succeed better than the diocesan clergy were doing. He had himself visited Douay, and had been very favourably impressed with what he saw. When, therefore, the crisis came in 1903, he was eager that

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the Benedictines should come to his diocese, and they on their side saw how great an advantage it would be to them to have a school, planned and erected for the purpose, to which they could bring their boys direct, without any interval during which they might easily lose touch with many. They accepted, therefore, the Bishop's offer, and determined to make their new start in England at Woolhampton School.

The accommodation for the monks at their new home was, naturally, most inadequate, for the buildings had not been designed for a monastery but only for a school. But for school purposes in some ways it was actually an improvement upon Douay, for the classrooms and refectory erected by the last two presidents had been well designed and were of good size, and there was at least one good dormitory. Moreover, there was a school hall or 'study-place,' the so-called Haydock Hall, which was all that such a room should be. As a nucleus, therefore, which could be added to in time, as means permitted, the new school was by no means unsatisfactory. The principal difficulty was the want of space for playing-fields and so forth, and this for some time seemed insuperable, and even made the community doubt whether a further move to wider territory was not desirable. It was, however, solved after a few years by the acquisition of the requisite land from the local landowner. The school now has playing-fields of adequate size and of quite exceptional beauty, with a number of great trees and a fine view. The actual building site is still narrow, and this has necessitated the new buildings being placed in one long line, with an inevitable lack of easy communication. The church, too, though an attractive building for the purpose for which it was erected, is obviously not adequate as an abbey church, and sooner or later this, too,

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must be taken in hand and rebuilt. Meanwhile it has been much beautified, and stalls for the monastic choir have been provided.

The fusion of the two schools—the existing school of the Bishop and the incoming school from Douay—made a decision necessary which would probably have been made in any case sooner or later, namely, to give up the exclusively ecclesiastical character which had been the dominant feature at Douay and to make the school a mixed school of lay boys and ecclesiastical students, like so many others of the older Catholic schools in England. The ‘burses’ belonging to the English Bishops, and administered by the French Government for so many years, were no longer available, and these had been the main support of the school as long as it was at Douay.

At the present time, therefore, ‘Douai School’ is a mixed school; but no difference is made in discipline or in any other way between those boys who are destined for the Church and the rest. The school is only now establishing itself. It is still in the period of its ‘beginnings.’ But, although no doubt in the near future we shall see many and important developments, it is already fully organised as a public school. In the matter of Rugby football—always, for some unexplained reason, so remarkably congenial to Catholic boys—it has made its mark by producing a very notable XV in 1924, which was almost unbeaten. In cricket it has so far done less strikingly well. But, here again, it is early days, the school has not been twenty-five years upon English soil, and if we look to the future, and compare what has already been done with the beginnings of the other great Benedictine schools a century earlier, we may well expect to see an abbey school established at Woolhampton which will rival or even surpass the great achievements of the older schools.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE ORATORY SCHOOL

FROM the accounts which we have already given of the state of the Catholic schools in England in the middle of the last century, it will be readily understood that the conditions which prevailed would not be altogether satisfactory in the eyes of the large number of convert gentlemen who themselves had been brought up under more advanced ideas in the great Protestant Public Schools. Oscott was no doubt the best of the secular schools at that period, but left a great deal to be desired even under the comparatively enlightened rule of Dr Northcote. Stonyhurst, again, was no doubt a flourishing school, but the system was still the strict Jesuit plan of the Continental schools, and this did not commend itself to all. Mothers especially pressed the disadvantage of any school for young boys where there was no lady, or even female servants, but only priests and lay brothers. There was a real desire, unvoiced but widely felt, for a school on lines that were less strictly ecclesiastical, and where woman's influence could be real and constant. Moreover, there was a tendency, probably not at all fully justified, on the part of Oxford and Cambridge men to look down on the Catholic clergy as not themselves adequately educated. Under these circumstances the idea was broached that perhaps Newman, who was just bringing to an end his connection with the Catholic uni-

## THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

versity at Dublin, might be induced to start a new school for Catholics under conditions more in accordance with the desires of this class of parents.

The first to sound Newman on the matter was Serjeant Bellasis, who had two sons, Richard and Lewis, growing up to school age, and could not feel satisfied with any of the existing schools for their education. He wrote to Newman on 26th October 1857 about his eldest boy, who was then nearly eight years old: "My present difficulty is what to do with him now, and I turn right and left, hitherto in vain, to find some place where he might be prepared for entering some more advanced school." He goes on to ask whether there would be any possibility of the Fathers of the Oratory starting a school, and suggests, with the concurrence of Mr Hungerford Pollen, the names of Father Darnell of the Oratory, and Mrs Wootton for the purpose.

Newman replied that the Fathers did, indeed, desire to start a public school 'such as Eton or Winchester.' They recognised that Edgbaston would not do as the site for such a school, but proposed only to get together some boys of eight or nine who might under their care 'grow into public school boys.' When this happened it would be time to move the school elsewhere and relinquish the charge into other hands.

From the first, Newman's advisers in the matter were old Etonians—Mr Hungerford Pollen, Sir John Simeon, Lord Charles Thynne, Mr Hope Scott, Mr Scott Murray, Mr Thomas Allies, and others. It was emphatically 'a Catholic Eton' that was desired. The obvious difficulty in the way was that, if the school was to be managed by the Oratorians, they could not well allow one or more ladies to sleep under their roof; and yet, if this were not done, these gentlemen felt that

## THE ORATORY SCHOOL

the school would only be another of the older kind, and would not meet their requirements. There were other difficulties, of course, to be surmounted: the question whether the Oratorian rule could allow of such a school; the necessity of ecclesiastical permissions; the vested interests of Oscott, and so forth. Negotiations on these subjects occupied the whole of a year, but they were all settled in time. The great difficulty of the provision of female influence was to be solved by the introduction of the time-honoured Eton system of 'Dames' houses.' This was settled, though only provisionally and subject to revision, by a decree of the Congregation which was passed on 4th December 1860:

"The establishment (of the school) shall consist of Dames' Houses for boarding and lodging the boys, and of a central building for all the Houses consisting of School room and Exhibition room, Headmaster's room, his servant's room, and accountant's room."

Before this formal resolution, however, a prospectus had been issued to the public—the exact date is not certain—which contained the same ideas. It said:

"It is the intention of Father Newman of the Birmingham Oratory, with the blessing of God, to commence on (May 2nd) a school for the education of boys, not destined to the ecclesiastical state, and not above twelve years of age on their admission.

"The House which he has taken for the purpose is within (five minutes) of the Oratory with garden and land, and capable of accommodating as many boys as are likely to be entrusted to his care.

"The house will be committed to the management of an experienced lady, as Matron; and the schoolroom and its Masters will be under the superintendence of Father Darnell (as Headmaster)."



## THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND

In another prospectus, dated 15th October 1861, the 'houses' are said to be "superintended, as at Eton, &c., by Tutors and by Dames." The number of boys then on the books was fifty-seven. "The school hours order discipline and books are those of an English Public School, so far as they are consistent with Catholic habits and requirements." "The rule of silence is strictly enforced in the dormitories by the Tutors, who sleep in rooms contiguous to them; a Master or Tutor is also present at study and in the playground." "The boys assist daily at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at seven o'clock. They say the Rosary every day before dinner. They visit the Blessed Sacrament at the conclusion of Evening School."

On these lines the school was opened on 2nd May 1859 at a pension of £80 a year. The first 'Dame's House' was committed to Mrs Wootton, and Father Darnell was to be the first Headmaster. There was, thus, to be a dual control from the first. These two, Mrs Wootton and Father Darnell, were, as Newman said, 'the two pillars of his undertaking.' But the school was his as Father of the Oratory, and he retained the supreme direction of affairs absolutely in his own hands. It was 'to his care' that boys were committed, and it was his name and that of Mrs Wootton that made the project feasible.

Mrs Wootton was a lady of some means, which she bestowed freely on the Oratory and the school. She was the widow of a well-known Oxford doctor, and a prominent figure in the Oxford of the day. She understood the position of a 'Dame' at Eton, a position which any lady could accept without loss of dignity, and undertook the duties of the post. She was a great personal friend of Newman's, and was also more than friendly with Father Darnell, who in his private correspondence

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addressed her as "My dear Mother," and signed himself "Your ever affectionate and grateful."

Father Darnell was a Winchester boy who had gone on to New College and become Fellow. His outlook was Winchester, 'in College,' and nothing else. New College in his time, of course, still contained only scholars from Winchester, and admitted no other undergraduates. He had, therefore, never had experience of a 'house system' of any kind. 'Commoners' at Winchester in his time, before Dr Moberley's reforms, did not live in houses, but in one single large establishment, and had comparatively little to do with collegers. He seems never to have grasped this idea of an Eton Dame's House. To him 'Dame' was merely the equivalent of 'Matron.' Mrs Wootton was his 'servant,' as Headmaster. He actually used the word to her.

The situation had, therefore, the seeds of future trouble from the beginning, though for a time all went smoothly. A good class of boy was obtained from the first. Richard Bellasis, now the senior Father of the Oratory, was actually the first boy. The young Duke of Norfolk, little Prince Doria, and others came almost directly. On 30th May 1860 Newman writes: "We are now in the springtide of the fortunes of our new school. Everything promises, and troubles have not come." Further immediate building was contemplated and put in hand. But the inevitable storm burst within six months.

The position was this. There was a Winchester Headmaster and an Eton 'Dame,' both working at incompatible ideals, and neither able nor willing to understand the other's position. Mrs Wootton stood on her rights. She was a 'Dame,' not a 'Matron.' She would probably never have accepted for

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a moment the second position. On the other hand, in Father Darnell's eyes she was a matron, and 'his servant.' Father Newman, as Superior, realised that Mrs Wootton was right in her contention, and also saw that Father Darnell had some reason on his side. The position as laid down in the prospectus was, in practice, an impossible one. Larger communities than the little Oratory School have found that a written constitution, where there is no living tradition, does not work out according to expectation. Even Eton, with four hundred years' tradition behind the system, was finding out that Dames' Houses would not work in the nineteenth century, and was slowly changing the system. But for the moment Mrs Wootton was within her rights, and Father Darnell was wrong. An adjustment was called for, but was made impossible by Father Darnell's headstrong action. He appealed to Newman in February 1860, saying that "as far as she and I are concerned the *status quo* cannot continue. One or other of us must go." Newman at the moment was actually preparing a new scheme, but this letter brought things to a head quickly. The real difficulty, as Newman saw clearly, was not merely the relation between the Headmaster and the Dame, but the relation between Father Darnell, as Headmaster, and himself, as Superior and representative of the Oratory. If he gave over the school absolutely into the hands of Father Darnell, which was what the latter was working for, he courted failure, for it was his name alone which made the school possible. Without his name the scheme would collapse at once.

At this moment the whole staff of four masters, all of whom were with Father Darnell on the questions at issue, thinking to strengthen his hands, asked that their resignations might follow his automatically, should he



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feel it necessary to resign. This was open rebellion and conspiracy against the Father Superior, and Newman did not hesitate a moment in accepting their resignations. That of Father Darnell followed immediately, and he went on eventually to resign also from the Congregation. The whole crisis had been brought about by his own injudicious precipitancy. But for that a way out might have been found. Newman had no hostility towards him, but, on the contrary, great affection and esteem. In a statement written at the height of the trouble, he said: "These two, Father Nicholas and Mrs Wootton, were the two pillars of my undertaking. What am I to do when co-operation between them is no longer possible? I will not lose the one, I will not lose the other. I will tell you what I will do." But Father Darnell himself made it impossible for him to do anything.

All this was taking place about Christmas 1861, and Newman found himself faced with the position that he now had a school and a dame, but no masters. Fortunately the boys were away on their holidays. But the holidays were short, only three or four weeks, and something must be done at once. Serjeant Bellasis and others got busy in London, and Mr Thomas Arnold, son of Dr Arnold of Rugby and younger brother of Matthew Arnold, was induced to accept the position of senior Classical Master. He had been a scholar at University College at Oxford, and become a Catholic in 1856. He had also been 'Professor of English' under Newman at Dublin. His reply was given on the 6th January, and on the 12th a hurriedly prepared notice was sent round to the parents, explaining that a rearrangement of the staff of the school was necessary, and giving the names of Newman himself as 'Prefect of Studies and Discipline,' and Father William Neville

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as 'Prefect of Houses.' It announced that 'Professor Arnold,' late Fellow of University College, Oxford, would be 'First Master.' He was not 'Professor' any longer, and had never been a Fellow, which shows how hastily things were being done. Mr Richard Pope was to be 'Second Master.' There was no longer a 'Headmaster' at all, nor a 'Dame.' Only "the boys are committed to the care of ladies experienced in such duties." Newman had learnt that the use of titles which carried definite associations to the minds of Public School men were best avoided. Not for many years was there again a 'Headmaster' of the Oratory School. Before the school reassembled on the 26th January the crisis had been surmounted, and a new staff was ready.

Obviously, however, Newman could not in person act as 'Prefect of Studies and Discipline,' though for safety's sake he long retained the title and rights. His dearest friend, Father Ambrose St John, was with difficulty persuaded to undertake Father Darnell's work. He agreed at last to fill the place *ad interim*, and his title was fixed as Vice-Prefect. The *ad interim*, in fact, lasted for the rest of his life, and he held the post till his death in 1875.

Under Father Ambrose St John the school grew and prospered quietly. There is little to chronicle, for there were no troubles. "Blessed is the school," like the country, "which has no history." Gradually additions were made to the buildings; the outlying houses were given up; the boys were brought into premises adjacent to the Oratory; cricket-fields and other adjuncts were provided, and the school developed on the lines of other Catholic schools, rather than on those which had originally projected. Mrs Wootton was no longer a 'Dame,' but she retained a position of considerable dignity in the school for many years,

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by no means that of an ordinary school matron. She is buried at Rednal, near the grave of Newman.

### NEWMAN AND THE ORATORY SCHOOL

To the general reader the principal interest of the school in the next twenty or thirty years lies in the connection with it of Newman himself. He was insistent to the end that he was the head of it, and that appeals on all points lay to him. For a long time he examined every boy personally once every month, a rather terrible ordeal for the boys, though he was always the kindest of examiners. He preached to the boys, a kind of catechetical lecture, every Sunday. His policy for the school was that the boys should be comfortable, and allowed as much freedom as possible. He was a great musician, and played the violin occasionally in quartettes with the boys. He also took the greatest interest in the Latin Plays, of which more hereafter, and himself revised the text, often rewriting large portions, and superintended the production. He was a great advocate for the 'saying lesson,' or 'lesson by heart,' and used to say that it was a great pity the practice of learning Latin poetry by heart was not more insisted on in modern schools. He was very anxious always to instil a high standard of honour, and was particularly severe on any course of action which could be considered mean or shabby. In consequence, a high standard in these matters always prevailed, and led on to the great success in formation of character which has always been a note of the school. "The boys were taught to be as free—as self-reliant and as free—as any of the young gentlemen who were growing up around them in the great public schools; but with it all there was an atmosphere of healthy religion, an un-



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constrained frequency in the approaching of the Sacraments, a sincere faith and a high code both of morals and of honour which appeared so natural and so native to the place, that it would have appeared spontaneous to anyone who did not know that the founding of the school, its influence, and its spirit were due to Cardinal Newman." This was the description given by Mr Hilaire Belloc at the time of Newman's death. "In the last years," he went on, "his great age made his time among the boys more and more short, until it was confined to an occasional service in the school chapel, or a rehearsal of the Latin Play, for which, seated in an armchair in front of the stage, he would give hints as to the acting and direct small changes in attitude and in interpretation. But one might almost say that, in proportion as the boys were deprived of his sight, so the peculiar love and reverence with which he was regarded grew." "His courtesy, his graciousness, the charm of his voice, enfeebled with its ninety years, will always be to them a carefully kept memory, standing peculiar and sacred among the rest." "To us who grew up under his roof in his last years, he will always be the same figure, an old man, very great, very reverend, but above all infinitely beloved."

### THE LATIN PLAYS

Another characteristic which Father Ambrose brought from Westminster was the Latin play. For many years this was a marked feature of the Oratory School. The first play thus acted was in 1865. Cardinal Newman put forth four plays, with the text revised and, where necessary, rewritten *in usu puerorum*. These were the *Phormio* and *Andria* of Terence, and the *Aulularia* of Plautus, with the '*Pincerna*,' a play adapted from Terence's *Eunuchus*. These plays formed

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a kind of cycle, and were acted in turn, one each year for many years, at the Speech Day at the end of the summer term. Looking back at the old lists of the performers, one comes across many familiar names. Mr Belloc, for instance, had the part of Phthias in the *Pincerna* in 1883, of Staphyla in the *Aulularia* in 1884, and of Geta in the *Phormio* in 1885. Other names of actors which will be familiar to present Oratory boys are those of Denis Sheil, Robert Eaton, Edward and Cecil Pereira, and, at a rather earlier date, Bellasis, Pollen, and Morgan. The tradition of the presentation was, as at Westminster, rather severe. There was little by-play and no subsidiary '*supers*' with no spoken words to utter, to help out the action of the scenes, but the elocution was most carefully attended to. At the same time a very high standard of music was kept up. Cardinal Newman himself, especially in the earlier days, would often join in this. A concert always formed part of the programme on the occasions of the performance of the Latin Play.

### THE PREFECT SYSTEM

Father Ambrose St John was a Westminster boy who had gone on to Christ Church, Oxford, and become student. Father William Neville was from Winchester, a commoner, and Trinity, Oxford. Mr Thomas Arnold had been at Rugby and also at Winchester. The Winchester influence upon the school was thus very strong, for Father Darnell, it will be remembered, was also from there; and Westminster, after all, was only Winchester at second hand, since Winchester was avowedly the model which Queen Elizabeth had followed in its foundation. So it is not surprising that Wykeham's prefect system found its way

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almost from the first into the Oratory School. The exact details of the system have varied from time to time as the years have passed, but there have always been prefects ever since those first years.

After Father St John's death the headmastership was taken by Father John Norris, who held it altogether for no less than thirty-nine years, from 1872 to 1911. He was a man of very remarkable gifts for the post; not a great scholar, but possessed of quite exceptional influence over boys, used always in the wisest and best way. All through its history the great object of the Oratory School has been the formation of character rather than the production of great scholars, and that it has been so singularly successful in this object is principally due to its three headmasters, who between them have ruled it for the whole of its existence of sixty-four years. The one word which his pupils came to associate with Father John was that of 'duty.' "Do your duty—be loyal to your superiors—be honourable in all that you do"—that was his incessant teaching, the great lesson of life which he tried to inculcate on all. How successful his work was, the lives of the many generations of Oratory boys who were brought up under him remain to prove. The late Duke of Norfolk was one of the earliest boys at the school. He learnt the same lesson from Father St John, and he stands out as a typical Oratory boy. His brother, Lord Fitz-Alan, still happily with us, is another. The type was set early in the school's life; it is being produced, unchanged in its essential feature, even to-day.

### CAVERSHAM PARK

The material surroundings of the school, so long as it remained at Edgbaston, were never satisfactory. It



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was too close to Birmingham, and the city crept up to it and surrounded it. To obtain adequate grounds for cricket and football the boys had to go long distances to the fields. There was no room for expansion, and at last it became clear that a move was necessary if the school were to live on at all. In 1922 a suitable place was found for the new home of the school in the mansion and grounds of Caversham Park, which was then purchased for the purpose.

The school now occupies a large Victorian house, certainly impressive, though hardly beautiful. It stands out very noticeably on the top of the hill which shuts in the view on the right from the trains of the Great Western Railway just before they arrive at Reading station. It is well above the Thames valley, unaffected by all the mists and fog, and has plenty of level fields on the higher ground for the purposes of sport. An impossible house to occupy for private purposes, it might have been built for a school, so little adaptation did it need. A new chapel, and a new wing for baths and similar purposes, have been almost all that has been required.

Although the present house was erected no longer ago than 1850, the estate of Caversham Park has a much more ancient history. Beginning with its earliest known owner, Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham, it had had a distinguished line of possessors, including that Earl of Pembroke who was Regent during the minority of Henry III; Hugh Despenser, the friend of Edward II; Warwick, the 'King-maker'; and the "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence" of Shakespeare.

Lord Knollys, who held the property about the beginning of the seventeenth century, entertained Queen Elizabeth here in 1601, and Queen Anne of Denmark in 1613. Some years later, when the pro-

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perty of Lord Craven, the house witnessed the last interview between Charles I and his two younger children. At a later date still it passed to one of Marlborough's Generals, and eventually, having been twice completely rebuilt, was bought by the Fathers of the Oratory from the Crawshaw family.

During the four years since 1922 a great deal has been done. The new chapel has been erected with a second smaller chapel adjoining, which last is the War Memorial of the school, where the Holy Mass will always be offered for the souls of the 'old boys' who gave their lives.

For the size of the school the war record was a most remarkable one. Though the numbers at Birmingham had seldom exceeded seventy, and those of all ages from eight upwards, no less than four hundred and twenty old boys held officers' commissions. Eighty-six gave their lives in the struggle; probably a larger proportion of the total number than can be shown by any other school in England, Catholic or Protestant.

### THE SCHOOL AT THE PRESENT TIME

The number, now that the school is at Caversham, is about one hundred and ten, and these will now be all of public-school age. There is no intention of enlarging the school further—at any rate for many years to come. The Fathers of the Oratory feel that their speciality has always been the formation of the characters of the boys entrusted to them. They have never looked for great individual scholastic successes. But they have tried to produce the greatest possible effect on the character of each individual boy, and to study each boy by himself. And this, they would maintain, can best be done in a small school. As soon

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as the school grows larger, the individual influence on each boy necessarily tends to diminish. They propose, therefore, to keep the total numbers at about their present level, and not to build to be able to take more.

The discipline of the school outside of school hours is to a very large extent in the hands of the boy prefects, of whom there are ten, under the Captain of the school as chief. They have the power of administering a small amount of corporal punishment, but collectively not individually, and a strict account has to be given of all punishment inflicted, the record being sent for inspection both to the Headmaster and also to the O.C. of the O.T.C.

All the boys of suitable age belong to the O.T.C., and all are expected to go to camp. The organisation of the O.T.C. enters more into the life of the school and its discipline than is usual at most schools. The Oratory has always sent a quite exceptional number of its boys into the army.

The sports record, especially for cricket, has always been exceptionally high, even in the old days at Birmingham, when cricket had to be played under difficulties, owing to the distance of the playing-fields from the school. Matches are played against Beaumont; Reading C.C.; Reading University; Douai School; Balliol College; Trinity College, Oxford, and others.

## THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Since it has been at Caversham, in order to keep all its comparatively small number of boys within the limits affected by other Public Schools, the Oratory School has found it necessary to open a Preparatory School for its younger members. It was very fortunate in being able to purchase a most suitable property



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about half a mile away, known as Rose Hill. Here they have a beautiful house, early Georgian in its older parts, with charming gardens and playing-fields. It will eventually accommodate about forty to fifty boys, who will have the right of being transferred as soon as they reach thirteen to the larger school at Caversham Park. Each of the schools is under the control of the Oratory Fathers, and one of the Fathers in each case acts as Headmaster; but large use is made of laymen, graduates of the universities, as assistants.

### THE GREAT FIRE

As this book is passing through the Press there comes the news of the disastrous fire of 30th August 1926, by which nearly the whole of the centre building was destroyed. Fortunately the new chapel, the War Memorial of the school, which had only just been completed, was untouched by the flames, but many treasured associations with the older school have been lost, and the damage done has reached very many thousands of pounds. It is sad that this book should end with the tale of such a disaster, but none will doubt that the Oratory School will rise again from its ashes, more beautiful and stronger, perhaps, than it otherwise could have been, so that, in the long run, even this catastrophe may prove to have been a blessing in disguise.

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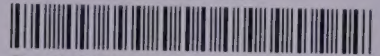
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